UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

FOURTH COMMITTEE
8th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 17 October 1990
at 10 a.m.
New York

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Chairman: Mr. ADOUKI (Congo)

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General debate

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN reminded the members of the Committee that the election of one Vice-Chairman and the Rapporteur had been postponed pending completion of the relevant consultations, which had now in fact been completed.

2. Mr. BLACKMAN (Barbados), supported by Mr. BRISTOL (Nigeria), nominated Mr. Acosta-Fragachan (Venezuela) to the post of Vice-Chairman.

3. Mr. Acosta-Fragachan (Venezuela) was elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.

4. Mr. AL-KINDI (United Arab Emirates) nominated Mr. Kember (New Zealand) to the post of Rapporteur.

5. Mr. Kember (New Zealand) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

6. Mr. ACOSTA-FRAGACHAN (Venezuela) and Mr. KEMBER (New Zealand) thanked the members of the Committee for their expression of confidence and said that they would do everything possible to ensure the success of the Committee's work.

REQUESTS FOR HEARING

7. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had received a communication (A/C.5/45/2/Add.6) containing a request for hearing on the question of New Caledonia. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee decided to grant the request.

8. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 113: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

Hearing of petitioners (A/C.4/45/6)

9. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. González González took a place at the petitioners' table.

10. Mr. GONZALEZ GONZALEZ said that the item now before the Committee was of great interest for all people who had not yet achieved liberation and he wished to comment on the question of the activities of the specialized agencies and international institutions in support of the interests of the 19 colonial Territories and also on the question of how those agencies and institutions were implementing General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 35/118.

(Mr. González González)

11. The colonial Territories fell into three categories: Trust Territories, Non-Self-Governing Territories, and all the other Territories which had not yet achieved independence. Puerto Rico should be included in the last category. Taken together, the population of such Territories amounted to 5 million. Their peoples felt themselves isolated when the activities of the specialized agencies and international institutions were addressed to one or a few of them but neglected the interests of the others. For that reason the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the World Bank, the World Health Organization (WHO) and other organizations should show an interest in all the Territories without exception.

12. In their statements in the Sub-Committee on Petitions, Information and Assistance of the Special Committee on Decolonization, the representatives of those organizations had said that they had worked in the interests of the colonial Territory of Namibia (now independent) and of the people of South Africa. That work had been extremely effective, but it was not enough, for General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) covered all colonial Territories without exception.

13. With regard to the question of the activities carried out in the interests of colonial Territories, he proposed that from 1991 the specialized agencies and other institutions of the United Nations system should be requested to take an active part in the work of the Fourth Committee during its consideration of the question of the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, with a view to furnishing information about their activities.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (continued)

Question of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands

Hearing of petitioners (A/C.4/45/4/Add.1)

14. Mr. GONZALEZ GONZALEZ, referring to the question of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, or Micronesia, which was the last of the original 11 colonial Territories, said that the United Nations must secure in the case of Micronesia the full implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and of the Plan of Action contained in General Assembly resolution 35/118.

15. In reply to the assertion by the delegation of the United States that the question of the colonial status of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands should not be considered in the Fourth Committee and fell within the exclusive competence of the Trusteeship Council, he said that the Fourth Committee was not only right but also obliged to consider the situation in the Territory and that Articles 83, 84 and 85 of the Charter of the United Nations contained nothing which excluded the possibility of consideration of the question of Micronesia in plenary meetings of the General Assembly. He adduced a number of arguments and referred to numerous documents in support of his position.

(Mr. González González)

16. He proposed that the question of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands should be included as a separate item on the agenda of the General Assembly. That was an essential move, for it would give all Members of the United Nations an opportunity to express their opinions on the question and enable the Territory to achieve independence with guarantees from the General Assembly and the Security Council that it would be a fully demilitarized and non-nuclear area of the world and have neutral status.

17. The Trusteeship Council had apparently become an obstacle to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and the attainment of independence by Micronesia, for its membership contained a majority of such major Powers as the United Kingdom, France and the United States, while African and Latin American countries were not represented. The membership of the Trusteeship Council must therefore be enlarged.

18. Mr. González González withdrew.

Question of New Caledonia

Hearing of petitioners (A/C.4/45/2/Add.6)

19. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Ching (Te Tata Tahiti Tiama) took a place at the petitioners' table.

20. Mr. CHING (Te Tata Tahiti Tiama) said that in the 30 years since the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the situation of the peoples of New Caledonia and Tahiti-Nui had not changed. Although originally included in the list of countries to be decolonized, those Territories had then been removed from the list by France acting unilaterally. The reason was that New Caledonia had large reserves of natural resources and that it had been decided to use Tahiti-Nui as a site for the disposal of France's nuclear wastes.

21. It was essential for Tahiti-Nui to be restored to the list. As for New Caledonia, although it had again been granted the status of Non-Self-Governing Territory, France was merely distracting the attention of international public opinion and was doing nothing to prepare the Kanak people for independence. The Matignon Agreement offered no guarantee of independence for New Caledonia and was defended only by people who found advantage in the existing situation. By signing the Agreement, the leaders of the Front de libération nationale kanak socialiste (FNLKS), which had set itself the target of fighting for Kanak independence, had become the victims of a deception. The Matignon Agreement was merely a means of prolonging French colonial rule.

22. France disregarded the requirement to observe human rights. For example, the head of the Government of Tahiti, Pouvanaa Oopa, had been thrown into prison and had spent more than 10 years there merely for advocating the independence of his country.

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23. Mr. MENAT (France), speaking on a point of order, asked Mr. Ching to keep to the agenda.

24. Mr. CHING said that he himself had been arrested three times and had spent rine and one half years in prison for defending the rights of his people. France was violating the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular, those pertaining to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to own property. The Kanaks had been forced into open confrontation with the French authorities, in order to regain control over part of their territory. The Tahitian people were in an even more difficult position since French rule prevailed in their territory.

25. For the sake of full adherence to the principles of the International Bill of Human Rights, the international community must persuade France to respect the rights of other peoples and to ensure that its activities would never again be the cause of bloodshed in its colonial ghetto. Serious consideration should be given to the question of New Caledonia and Tahiti-Nui.

26. Mr. Ching withdrew.

Question of the United States Virgin Islands

27. The CHAIRMAN said that the representative of the Governor of the United States Virgin Islands had asked to make a statement. In accordance with standing procedure the Chairman suggested that the Committee should invite the representative to speak.

28. It was so decided.

29. Mr. CORBIN (representative of the Governor of the United States Virgin Islands) said that, in accordance with established practice, his Government had had the opportunity earlier in the year to address the Special Committee on decolonization and its Sub-Committee on Small Territories and had carefully followed the general debate both in the Special Committee and in the Fourth Committee, particularly on the matter of the decolonization of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories, the majority of which were small island countries in the Caribbean and the Pacific.

30. In its statements in the Special Committee, the Government of the United States Virgin Islands had repeatedly reaffirmed the need to analyse the existing political and constitutional mechanisms. Some delegations had expressed the view in the Special Committee and the Fourth Committee that some resolutions of the Special Committee were outdated, in view of the lessening of ideological tension in the world. Decolonization, however, had never been an ideological issue: it had always been a human issue - the right, embodied in the Charter, of a people to decide its own destiny. Those same delegations had supported a modification, tantamount to a downgrading, of the work of the United Nations in the area of decolonization. In that connection, it should be recalled that General Assembly resolution 43/47 declared the International Decade for the Eradication of

(Mr. Corbin)

Colonialism, signalling the need for more, rather than less, attention to be given to the issue of decolonization.

31. On 20 August 1990 the Special Committee had adopted a decision to defer consideration of a proposal to replace the individual resolutions on the small island Territories of the Caribbean and Pacific with one omnibus resolution of general principles, which would remove the need to focus attention on the unique circumstances of each of the Territories. The Government of the United States Virgin Islands, as well as the Government of Guam, had officially informed the Special Committee of their views on that proposal. The Government of the United States Virgin Islands hoped that a rational plan for the administrative reform by the United Nations of the process of decolonization could be worked out in 1990, taking into account the concerns of the peoples of the Territories and the regional groups to which those Territories belonged.

32. In May and June 1990, two United Nations regional seminars on decolonization had been held in Vanuatu and Barbados, at which representatives of the elected Governments of the Non-Self-Governing Territories of the Caribbean, representatives of non-governmental organizations and specialists on decolonization had discussed the political development of their Territories. Participants in both seminars had endorsed the view that direct participation by representatives of the Governments of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the United Nations review of the decolonization process, as well as participation in specialized agencies and technical organs of the United Nations system, would further the decolonization process.

33. The Committee might accordingly wish to consider amending the draft resolution contained in document A/45/23 (Part V), to provide for the granting of observer status in the General Assembly to the elected Governments of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. That draft resolution referred to the work of the United Nations Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee, a subregional body of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). The Working Group of Non-Independent Countries of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee, which was presided over by a representative of the Government of the United States Virgin Islands as an associate member of ECLAC, was currently examining the level of access of the Caribbean non-self-governing territories to the programmes and activities of the United Nations system. The draft resolution also called for the facilitation of the participation of the representatives of the Governments of Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories in meetings and conferences of the United Nations agencies and organizations. The speedy implementation of that directive could be achieved by granting the Non-Self-Governing Territories observer status in the General Assembly of the United Nations; that would allow for more effective monitoring of the implementation of the General Assembly resolutions in the individual Territories.

34. His Government welcomed the draft resolution prepared by the Special Committee on the question of the United States Virgin Islands (A/45/23 (Part VI), draft resolution XI). The draft resolution referred to the referendum on political

(Mr. Corbin)

status which had been postponed because of hurricane Hugo. It was important to note that the public education programme on the question of political status, which had been suspended following the hurricane, would shortly resume. In that connection, it was planned to reactivate the Virgin Islands Status Commission. The Government of the United States Virgin Islands hoped that a positive response would be given to the request made by the Commission in 1989 for a United Nations visiting mission to observe the political education programme before the referendum was held.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (continued) (A/45/23 (Part VI (Chapter IX)), A/AC.109/1015 and Corr.1, 1016-1021, 1023 and Corr.1 and Add.1, 1024-1036, 1041 and Corr.1, 1044 and 1048 and Corr.1/Rev.1)

AGENDA ITEM 111: INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES TRANSMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 73 e OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/45/23 (Part V (Chapter VIII)) and A/45/559)

AGENDA ITEM 113: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/45/3 (Chapters I and VI) (Section D)), A/45/23 (Part V) and A/45/309; A/AC.109/L.1740; E/1990/72)

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued) (A/45/3 (Chapters I and VI (Section D))

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AGENDA ITEM 115: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (continued) (A/45/560)

General debate

35. Mr. BRISTOL (Nigeria) said that the United Nations and the international community as a whole had achieved greater success in decolonization than in any other area. 1990 marked the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960. Nigeria, which had joined the United Nations on 7 October 1960, was very proud of the active role it had played in the elaboration and adoption of that resolution. Nigeria condemned and rejected colonialism, wherever and in whatever guise it occurred. As the twentieth century drew to a close, it was essential to put an end to the colonial era as well. In that connection, his delegation welcomed General Assembly resolution 43/47, which declared the period 1990-2000 as the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. Nigeria was prepared to make every effort to realize that noble objective.

(Mr. Bristol, Nigeria)

36. In his message on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1514 (XV), the President of Nigeria had said that perhaps no other people had suffered more from colonialism than the people of the continent of Africa. It was gratifying to note that, with Namibia's independence, the colonial era in Africa was coming to an end. The time had come when the international community should seriously consider instituting a decade of reparations for Africa. That idea was based on a thorough appreciation of the history, economics and psychology of colonialism. At the height of the colonial era, the continent of Africa had been depopulated and its resources depleted. His delegation hoped that Africa's claims would be carefully considered when the time came.

37. He noted the positive changes with regard to Western Sahara, New Caledonia and the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), and in particular the restoration of full diplomatic relations between Argentina and the United Kingdom. With regard to New Caledonia, Nigeria continued to monitor the strict implementation of the Matignon and the Rue Oudinot Agreements. In 1998 the people of New Caledonia must be given the opportunity to determine their political future. Nigeria hoped that the fruits of socio-economic development would be brought to all parts of the Territory, including the Northern Province and the Loyalty Islands Province. With regard to Western Sahara, Nigeria was eager to see the resolution of all the outstanding issues, to ensure that both parties to the crisis would implement without delay the joint settlement proposals of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations, which had already been accepted in principle. Nigeria was prepared to play any suitable role in the proposed United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). With its traditions of brotherhood, good-neighbourliness and mutual respect for one another's rights, Africa could not tolerate the continuation of that fratricidal conflict. Nigeria continued to commend the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative with regard to Western Sahara.

38. The Government and people of Nigeria sincerely hoped that the world would enter the twenty-first century truly free from colonialism. Neither temporary set-backs nor occasional differences of views should impede the realization of that ultimate goal.

39. Mr. ANTONIO (Mozambique) said that the world was celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples with renewed hopes that it would enter the twenty-first century free from colonialism and racism. The lengthy struggle for the granting of independence to Namibia had been crowned with success but the task could not be considered complete until Walvis Bay, a part of its territory that was still occupied by South Africa, had been returned to the Namibian people.

40. The outstanding achievements of recent years in the field of decolonization should not, however, be allowed to obscure the fact that there were still many examples in the world of policies similar to colonialism and very careful attention should be given to them. His delegation was concerned about the brutal actions of the South African police and the policies pursued by the Pretoria régime aimed at

(Mr. Antonio, Mozambique)

supporting terrorist forces and destabilizing the region, and it called upon the international community to show greater initiative and creativity in approaching the task of eliminating apartheid once and for all.

41. With regard to East Timor, his delegation welcomed the establishment of regular contacts between the parties concerned and exhorted them to continue their dialogue until an acceptable solution had been found.

42. As for Western Sahara, his delegation supported the initiatives and steps taken by the Secretary-General and considered it essential to create adequate conditions for the Saharan people to decide the question of their future freely and independently.

43. His delegation believed that the Committee should continue to mobilize all necessary assistance for the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in their struggle to ensure their right to freedom, peace and territorial integrity. The activities of certain foreign economic interests, which were impeding the realization of that right, violated the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions.

44. As the end of the decolonization process drew nearer, it was important to move from words to action and to do everything possible to ensure that the winds of change blowing across the entire world were felt by those peoples still under foreign domination and administration.

45. Ms. LIU Sha (China) said that the celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on decolonization bore witness to the great practical significance of the principles embodied in that Declaration. Over the past 30 years many countries had overcome colonial rule through a process of tireless struggle, had gained national self-determination and had become masters of their own destiny. The attainment of independence by the people of Namibia after many years of struggle was not only a historic event but also a major victory in the cause of decolonization.

46. The international community, in particular the Fourth Committee and the Special Committee on decolonization, had also played an important role in ensuring the success of many former colonies and Non-Self-Governing Territories in their struggle for independence. Matters should not be allowed to rest there, however: it was essential to fight for the full elimination of colonialism in accordance with the aspirations of the international community and the demands of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

47. The disintegration of the colonial system reflected the inevitable trend of historical development, but remnants of colonialism still existed and the threat of hegemonism and power politics remained in evidence. There were still more than a dozen Non-Self-Governing Territories and the administering Powers were duty-bound to promote the political, economic and social development of their peoples, in order to ensure their eventual self-determination in accordance with the United Nations Charter and the Declaration on decolonization.

(Ms. Liu Sha, China)

48. Progress had also been made in 1990 towards a peaceful settlement of the question of Western Sahara. In June 1990, the Secretary-General had submitted to the Security Council a report on the settlement proposals, which had been ratified by the Council. China eagerly awaited an early and peaceful settlement of that question.

49. The current international situation revealed a number of positive trends towards the relaxation of tension, which were bound to be conducive to the process of decolonization and the self-determination of the colonial peoples. The world situation was changing rapidly and events sometimes took unexpected turns. That should not be allowed, however, to impede the free economic, social and cultural development of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and their independent determination of their political status.

50. With regard to the need to increase the efficiency of the Committee's work, her delegation maintained that efforts in that direction should have as their aim the full implementation of the provisions of the Declaration on decolonization and the United Nations Charter and the early elimination of colonialism in its various manifestations.

51. Mrs. AGUILERA (Mexico) said that the work of the Special Committee on decolonization and of the Fourth Committee was of great value. Those bodies provided the international community with a unique monitoring mechanism to safeguard the rights and interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, but the effectiveness of that mechanism was limited by the failure of certain States to meet their obligations under the Charter.

52. The Organization's future activities in the field of decolonization would largely depend on the degree to which its States Members responsible for the administration of the Territories complied with their obligations and the efficacy with which the competent agencies of the Organization performed their duties.

53. In furthering the decolonization process it was essential to bear in mind the prevailing conditions in the world, notably the international consensus that all peoples should have the right freely to determine all aspects of their own lives.

54. In promoting self-determination and independence in a number of cases, the Special Committee and the Fourth Committee had been guided by the principle of justice in relations between peoples. It would be neither fair nor ethical for either to stop defending peoples that for one reason or another were regarded in the international political arena as insignificant, and even less for them to make an independent decision about how to judge their importance. That was why her delegation attached great importance to the preparation of the future work programmes of those bodies in the area of decolonization.

55. She was concerned over the paradox that the forms of external administration of their Territories offered by the United Nations to some peoples had apparently become an obstacle to their self-determination.

(Mrs. Aguilera, Mexico)

56. She welcomed the continuation of the dialogue between the United Kingdom and Argentina, which had progressed to the point of the complete normalization of relations between the two parties, and hoped for a just and definitive settlement of the dispute over the sovereignty of the Malvinas.

57. She also noted with satisfaction that negotiations were being conducted between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO with a view to the holding of a referendum, for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, organized and supervised by the United Nations in co-operation with the Organization of African Unity, and she hoped that the final outcome would be self-determination for the Western Saharan people.

58. On the question of New Caledonia, she supported the relevant resolutions of United Nations organs and was convinced that an effective and lasting solution to that problem could be achieved only through the implementation of those resolutions and of other decisions in the field of decolonization.

59. Mr. BALLON (Uruguay) said that the United Nations had achieved its greatest successes in decolonization, as evidenced by the fact that more than 50 Member States had achieved independence as a result of its efforts to ensure the right of peoples to self-determination. The clearest example of those successes was Namibia.

60. There were still 18 Territories that had to be helped to achieve independence by the end of the century. They were distinguished only by their relatively small size and population; that, however, in no way diminished their right to self-determination and did not relieve the United Nations and the administering Powers of responsibility for their future. The United Nations, the Fourth Committee and the Special Committee on decolonization must exert maximum efforts to guarantee the rights of the population of those Territories. The administering Powers, for their part, must act with the highest degree of responsibility, selflessness and altruism towards them.

61. Essentially, the goal was for the indigenous peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories freely to decide their own future. That could be achieved only under certain circumstances. The population must have a sense of national self-awareness; that could be achieved by educational work in the cultural field. Community groups must be organized to suggest and explain to the population what opportunities were becoming available to it; that required a climate of complete freedom and tolerance. As for the economy, each people must freely determine its own path of development. Many of those Territories were being used as military bases; that in itself was not without its positive aspects, but those bases, by very virtue of their existence, served the goals of political intimidation.

62. All those problems could be solved only through positive action by the administering Powers and effective monitoring and supervision by the United Nations.

63. In his view, in the future it would be necessary to seek consensus on all resolutions the Committee might adopt that may require a review of the recommendations contained therein.

(Mr. Ballon, Uruguay)

64. The objectives of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) could be achieved only through joint efforts. In order to make progress in all the Territories it was essential to work together with the administering Powers and not against their interests.

65. On the question of Western Sahara, he said that, in his opinion, all the conditions were present to enable the Western Saharan people to achieve self-determination under the supervision of the United Nations during the current year. By way of confirmation, he cited the fact that the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO had accepted the Secretary-General's proposal for a referendum, were actively co-operating with his Special Representative, and had shown their good will and readiness to achieve a settlement in accordance with the provisions of document A/AC.109/1048.

66. The Secretary-General's reports must be carefully analysed in order to solve all unclarified issues with a view to expediting the sending of the MINURSO mission by the Security Council.

67. The Government of Morocco had done a great deal to ensure the effective organization of the referendum. He called upon the Government of Morocco to come up with a positive solution to the problem of the dissemination of information on the number of its troops that would remain in the Territory during the referendum. The problem of the police forces in that zone and the problem of settlers must also be solved. The expression of their wishes by the Western Saharan people in a referendum organized and supervised by the United Nations was the only way to settle the conflict once and for all.

68. True to its democratic traditions, Uruguay sought to enable all peoples of the planet to enjoy the advantages of freedom and self-determination and was prepared to do everything required of it to achieve that goal.

69. Uruguay hoped that the problem of Western Sahara would be solved in 1991 through a referendum organized in accordance with the Secretary-General's plan.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

70. The CHAIRMAN proposed that in view of the importance of the outstanding issues and the fact that some documents relating to them had still not been issued, the date for closing the speakers' list for the general debate should be extended to Friday, 19 October, at 6 p.m.

71. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

FOURTH COMMITTEE
9th meeting
held on
Thursday, 18 October 1990
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 9th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ADOUKI (Congo)

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General debate

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AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (continued)

Question of New Caledonia

Hearing of petitioners (A/C.4/45/2/Add.5)

1. The CHAIRMAN reminded the members of the Committee that they had agreed to grant a request for hearing contained in document A/C.4/45/2/Add.5.

2. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Wamytan (Front de libération nationale kanak socialiste) took a place at the petitioners' table.

3. Mr. WAMYTAN (Front de libération nationale kanak socialiste) said that 30 years after the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, which had given a boost to the process of decolonization throughout the world, it should not be forgotten that the struggle for self-determination and independence of the peoples of more than 15 Non-Self-Governing Territories was still continuing. The majority of the Territories were islands lost in the expanses of the oceans, but their geographical position, low population density and scant reserves of natural resources could not justify denying their peoples their legitimate rights.

4. One such territory was New Caledonia, whose history of colonial rule by France had lasted 137 years. Subjected to massive repressions and herded into reservations, the Kanak people had now become a minority in its own country and had been squeezed out to the margins of political, economic and cultural life. It was perfectly natural that the Kanak people could not accept such a fate and had waged a tireless struggle for liberation throughout its colonial history. That struggle had been raised to a new level when the indigenous inhabitants had been granted the right to vote in 1953.

5. The Front de libération nationale kanak socialiste (FLNKS) had been created in order to thwart the attempts to integrate the Territory with France and to guarantee the future of the Kanak people as a nation; FLNKS was the sole lawful representative of the Kanak people and had set itself the goal of fighting against colonialism and for independence. From 1984 the Front had opposed the imposition on the Territory of the Lemoine Statute by actively boycotting elections and it had fought against the policy of disregarding the Kanak people pursued by the cabinet of Jacques Chirac, the sad outcome of which had been the tragic events of May 1988 on Ouvéa island. The French Government had thus been forced to agree under pressure from FLNKS to a dialogue which had led to the signing of the Matignon Agreements.

(Mr. Wamytan)

6. Recognition of the Kanak struggle for national liberation had been marked by the adoption by the General Assembly in its resolution 41/41 A of 2 December 1986 of a decision to restore New Caledonia to the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories, by the granting of observer status to FLNKS in the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in 1986, and by its acceptance in 1990 as a fully-fledged member of the Melanesian Spearhead Group.

7. FLNKS regarded the tripartite Matignon Agreements as a link in the general strategy of fighting for liberation. The Agreement reflected above all the desire of the parties to put an end to the escalating violence which threatened to drag New Caledonia into a civil war and it facilitated the transition to a division of political and economic power, as well as obliging the French Government to grant an amnesty to political prisoners and carry out a number of other measures.

8. Implementation of the Matignon Agreements had made it possible to make up much of the ground lost in the development of the infrastructure over the years of colonial rule, to improve the Territory's economy, to reduce its dependence on metropolitan France, and to encourage the development of Kanak culture. Within the framework of the Territory's new status, powers had been granted to three provinces, institutions had been set up to carry out a fair land policy and develop Kanak culture, and the training of local staff, including managers, was to be speeded up.

9. However, although the Matignon Agreements demonstrated the genuine desire of the French Government to promote the Territory's development, FLNKS believed that it did not offer a clear prospect of transition to independence, and the wish of the Government itself to begin the decolonization process was open to doubt. The Rocard plan was unacceptable to FLNKS, for it did not resolve, amongst other issues, the questions of amnesty for political prisoners and the voting qualification, and the Front did not accept the time-limits for the plan's implementation. Everything seemed to indicate that France and the Rassemblement pour la Calédonie dans la République (RPCR) were gambling on the maintenance of the colonial status of the Kanaks.

10. The indigenous Kanak population was convinced that the process of national liberation which was unfolding in accordance with the provisions of the Declaration on decolonization could not be turned back. Therefore, the French Government should begin a genuine process of decolonization and do everything possible to prepare the Territory for the transition to independence after the 1998 referendum. For FLNKS the need to restore the sovereignty of the Kanak people was not open to discussion; it was only a question of the means and the timing.

11. The referendum on self-determination must be organized in accordance with the principles and rules of the United Nations, and participation in it must be authorized only for the representatives of the Kanak people who were vitally interested in self-determination and for the "victims of historical circumstances" - the descendants of immigrants to New Caledonia from countries of Asia and Europe. Only in such conditions would the referendum on self-determination be a genuine decolonization referendum.

(Mr. Wamytan)

12. In that connection, FLNKS requested the United Nations to appeal to the Government of France to initiate the decolonization of the Territory in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV) and with the Charter of the United Nations. New Caledonia must remain on the list of Territories awaiting decolonization, for its removal from the list would reduce to nothing all the measures which had been taken so far.

13. The Kanak people did not wish to be the poor stepchild of decolonization. That was why he was interested in the dispatch to New Caledonia of a United Nations mission to observe the implementation of a process already begun. In that connection, FLNKS urged the Committee to consider in detail the resolution adopted at the Twenty-first South Pacific Forum on the question of New Caledonia and the proposals put forward at the seminar on decolonization held in Vanuatu, especially with regard to setting up a regional subdivision of the United Nations in that region. It was also necessary to ensure that the administering Power provided regular information on the situation in New Caledonia, in pursuance of Article 73 e of the Charter.

14. Mr. LOHIA (Papua New Guinea), noting the positive aspects of the Matignon Agreements but also the French Government's apparent lack - as mentioned earlier - of a genuine desire to begin the decolonization process, inquired whether a specific plan for the self-determination of the Kanak people had been agreed upon by the three parties.

15. Mr. WAMYTAN replied that the Matignon Agreements had been signed in 1988 to end further bloodshed and violence. Their implementation could only to a limited extent prepare the Kanak people for independence; they were unable to satisfy fully the people's legitimate demand for self-determination. Thus, there was no specific plan for a transition to independence.

16. Mr. LOHIA (Papua New Guinea), noting the positive changes in Eastern Europe and the forthcoming integration of Europe in 1992, said he would be interested in the speaker's view as to whether those changes would facilitate decolonization or would place additional obstacles in its path. In addition, in view of the elections due to be held in France during the next year or two, he would be interested in an assessment of their possible effect on the prospects for Kanak self-determination.

17. Mr. WAMYTAN said that FLNKS was concerned lest those who came to power in France did not keep the promises made by the present Government. FLNKS considered that the international community was the best guarantor of observance of the Matignon Agreements. Furthermore, the Committee to Monitor the Agreements had been set up and was functioning, and in 1992 the intention was to take stock of the preliminary results of the implementation of the Agreements and to assess their prospects.

18. Mr. LOHIA (Papua New Guinea) repeated his first question and also asked whether FLNKS had a plan of action in the event that the French Government changed its position.

19. Mr. WAMYTAN said that FLNKS wished to settle the question of the independence of New Caledonia before the integration of Europe, since the free mobility of labour and capital resulting from that process would change the situation radically. As for the French Government, after the elections it would avoid giving a specific reply regarding the prospects for implementing the Matignon Agreements. FLNKS was working out possible options for action to take in the event of a breach of their implementation.

20. Mr. BUGOTU (Solomon Islands), referring to the FLNKS request for the dispatch to New Caledonia of a United Nations observer team, said that, from all accounts, France was not inclined to admit such a mission to the Territory. He would be interested to know the position taken on that question by the Rassemblement pour la Calédonie dans la République (RPCR) and how it was intended to gain France's consent to inviting a United Nations observer mission.

21. Mr. WAMYTAN, observing that the Rocard cabinet's position on instituting reforms was vital, noted that, when the decision to send an observer mission had been taken at the latest meeting of the South Pacific Forum, in Vanuatu, the representative of France had not rejected the idea. RPCR, for its part, had never expressed its view on that issue; it had declined to take part in the meeting in Port-Vila, and its position was unknown to FLNKS.

22. Replying to a question from Mr. LOHIA (Papua New Guinea) as to whether agreement had been reached on the formula for preparing the electoral register for the 1998 referendum, Mr. WAMYTAN said that FLNKS had at first rejected the idea of including in the electoral register all those who had participated in the 1988 referendum. At first FLNKS had recognized the right to participate in the referendum only in respect of the Kanak representatives of the colonial people, whereas subsequently, as part of the package of proposals in the Matignon Agreements, it had consented to a broader interpretation which would include the concept of "victims of historical circumstances". For the purpose of drawing up the electoral register for participation in the referendum on self-determination in 1998, FLNKS advocated the principle of residence of electors who had participated in the 1988 referendum, in other words, their continuous residence in New Caledonia for the past 10 years.

23. Replying to the point made by the representative of Solomon Islands to the effect that France had recently declined the proposal put forward by Fiji, Nauru and Solomon Islands at the meeting of the South Pacific Forum in Vanuatu for the dispatch of an observer mission to New Caledonia, he expressed surprise at such a change of position by France, and explained that FLNKS was not empowered to decide on questions of inviting observers; it would, however, seek France's consent during consultations and within the Committee to monitor the Agreements.

24. Mr. MENAT (France) said that the Matignon Agreements had been the focus of attention of the referendum held in France in 1988, and that support by the French population for those Agreements would serve as the best guarantee of their implementation.

25. Mr. WAMYTAN withdrew.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered by other agenda items) (continued) (A/45/23 (Part VI) (chap. IX); A/AC.109/1015 and Corr.1, 1016-1021, 1023 and Corr.1 and Add.1, 1024-1036, 1041 and Corr.1, 1044 and 1048 and Corr.1/Rev.1)

AGENDA ITEM 111: INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES TRANSMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 73 e OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/45/23 (Part V) (chap. VIII) and A/45/559)

AGENDA ITEM 113: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/45/3 (chaps. I and VI (sect. D), A/45/23 (Part V) and A/45/309; A/AC.109/L.1740; E/1990/72)

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued) (A/45/3 (chaps. I and VI (sect. D))

AGENDA ITEM 114: UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA (continued) (A/45/553)

AGENDA ITEM 115: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (continued) (A/45/560)

General debate

26. Mr. KOUNKOU (Congo) said that, during the 30 years since the adoption of the Declaration on decolonization, many oppressed peoples had achieved great successes in their struggle, and a large number of dependent Territories had freed themselves from colonial rule. Much of the credit for that achievement lay with the United Nations, above all the Fourth Committee and the Special Committee on decolonization.

27. Whereas 30 years earlier the African continent had been on the threshold of decolonization, today various parts of that continent had attained sovereignty. Yet there were still Territories whose colonial status rendered the Special Committee's work essential. His delegation welcomed the attainment of sovereignty by Namibia, one of the last African colonies. Namibia's participation in United Nations activities had fortunately coincided with the growth of the Organization's role in the maintenance of peace and justice.

28. The Special Committee's work over those 30 years had to a large degree concerned Africa. Today, few of the items on its agenda concerned Africa. Under the auspices of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), a plan had been formulated for a settlement of the question of Western Sahara which was acceptable to the parties concerned. Congo supported the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General and of the current Chairman of OAU aimed at the speedy organization of a referendum on the self-determination of that Territory.

(Mr. Kounkou, Congo)

29. Turning to the political issues concerning Africa, he said it was difficult not to dwell on the policy of apartheid pursued by the Government of South Africa and the destructive consequences of that policy, including its effects on the population of neighbouring countries. The situation remained serious, even though day after day apartheid was retreating, thanks to the bold steps being taken by President de Klerk and Nelson Mandela, Vice-President of the African National Congress. The eradication of apartheid remained a priority task. The opening of peaceful talks would help to transform South Africa into a non-racial, democratic society. At the same time, only the continuation of the sanctions would assist the continued and irreversible evolution of the peace process currently under way in South Africa.

30. The time had come when the Fourth Committee, availing itself of the improved international climate, could reach the atmosphere of agreement needed to enhance its effectiveness.

31. Mr. TARANENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that, when adopting the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the General Assembly had recognized that the road to its implementation would be long and difficult, and that it would require persistence and no small effort from the international community. Although many at that time had sincerely believed that the final collapse of the colonial system would come more quickly, the solution to the problem had proved to be a lengthy process.

32. The decolonization of Namibia - a huge territory which was now a full Member of the United Nations - was a fitting commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration. That process had been difficult, and it would be no exaggeration to say that the principal role therein had been played by the United Nations itself. Together with the entire international community the Ukrainian SSR had participated in ensuring the Namibian people's right to independence. He expressed the hope that the peoples and Governments of the world would not forget an experience which had been of such value to the Organization. His delegation was profoundly convinced of the necessity and feasibility of swift and complete elimination of the very concept of "colonialism". Now that the problem of Namibia had been solved, the world community would have more attention, resources and determination available to it for dismantling the last vestiges of colonialism.

33. The situation with regard to Western Sahara seemed to be close to a positive outcome. The main problem still to be settled was the organization and financing of a referendum of the Saharan people on self-determination. The financial support of the United Nations had been assured both for the Namibian process and the elections in Haiti. There were thus favourable prospects for a referendum in Western Sahara.

34. His delegation considered that in 1990, when relatively few Non-Self-Governing Territories remained in the world, it was important to choose the right point at which to apply force. The Ukrainian SSR was ready to co-operate with all interested countries, organizations and non-governmental groups in order to ensure

(Mr. Taranenko, Ukrainian SSR)

that the very concept of "non-self-government" disappeared. To eliminate a hotbed of tension in north-west Africa was to eliminate a hotbed of tension in the world as a whole.

35. In his view, it was necessary once again to recall the principle, enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, of the equal rights of large and small nations and the principle of the resolute determination of the international community not to allow advantage to be taken of a Territory's small size or small population to justify failure to implement the Declaration on decolonization. If the approach to such Territories was based on a free expression of their peoples' will under international supervision and on the interests of the peoples of the colonial Territories, ultimate success was assured, as in the case of Namibia.

36. His delegation did not always understand the logic followed by the States administering such Territories. Their actions were probably motivated by normal human inertia. Such inertia, for example, had resulted in the somewhat stale formulas used in some provisions of the draft resolutions.

37. The United Nations must not waver on the issue of calling upon the administering Powers to accelerate the process of completing decolonization. That must be done with the urgency expected of the Member States by peoples still deprived of their inalienable right. His delegation considered that it was extremely important to extend the new thinking to the processes of decolonization, and expressed the hope that the day would come when, as a result of the concerted efforts of the international community, no vestiges of colonialism would remain in the world.

38. Mr. SAVOV (Bulgaria) said that one could not underestimate the immense impact of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the thirtieth anniversary of whose adoption had recently been observed by the General Assembly, not only on the colonial peoples in their struggle for self-determination and independence, but on the United Nations as a whole. The political emancipation of peoples and the admission of newly emerging States to membership in the United Nations had to a considerable extent changed the very substance of the Organization by transforming it into a universal and representative forum.

39. Particular stress should be laid on the unprecedented involvement of the United Nations in the peaceful transition of Namibia to independence. The efforts of the United Nations, however, would have been much more painful without the spirit of détente in East-West relations and the close co-operation between the Soviet Union and the United States. In his country's view, compromise and constructiveness had also played a major role in the approach to the question of Western Sahara. The adoption by the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session of a compromise resolution on that issue gave grounds for hope that the question of Western Sahara would soon be resolved in accordance with the plan of the Secretary-General.

(Mr. Savov, Bulgaria)

40. His delegation also expressed the hope that the Matignon Agreements would be implemented consistently in the interests of the people of New Caledonia on its road to self-determination.

41. It was his delegation's conviction that the decolonization process would have been much more effective had it not been for the ideological rivalry between East and West. His delegation was confident that the positive changes in the world and the enhanced role of the United Nations would help the world to enter the new century free from colonialism. Accordingly, it fully subscribed to the statement of the Secretary-General affirming that, in their approach to resolving the remaining colonial problems, the Member States must act with dispassionate objectivity, guided solely by the wishes and well-being of the peoples directly concerned.

42. Mr. TADESSE (Ethiopia) said that, over the years, the Fourth Committee had played an important role in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 and of the relevant articles of the Charter on decolonization. Since the adoption of that resolution the United Nations had fulfilled a large part of its responsibilities in the field of decolonization.

43. In 1990 the Committee had a unique opportunity to review progress in decolonization and to chart a more effective course of action in the pursuit of that noble objective. In commemorating that anniversary, the Special Committee had recommended that two regional seminars should be held in the regions where most of the Territories were located. The seminars had been held in Vanuatu and Barbados. They had enabled members of the Special Committee to learn at first hand the wishes of the parties directly concerned. In its future work the Special Committee must continue to take full account of the views contained in the reports of the seminars.

44. Non-Self-Governing Territories were for the most part island Territories whose vulnerability to environmental hazards was well known. They could not withstand the pressure of foreign economic interests which impeded decolonization. While some had been identified as ideal targets for the dumping of industrial waste, others had become victims of massive drift-net fishing carried out by foreign States. That was why he was calling upon the administering Powers to continue to assist Territories in meeting their economic needs and also in protecting their natural environment.

45. As many speakers had said, the prevailing international atmosphere was encouraging. The spirit of co-operation which had recently emerged would undoubtedly accelerate decolonization. Viewed against the backdrop of such promising political developments, the work of the Special Committee and of the Fourth Committee could be perceived as anachronistic in terms of methods and approach. Such an impression, however, arose precisely because their mandate focused on the anachronistic phenomenon known as colonialism.

46. The resolutions to be adopted should reflect the realities obtaining in the Non-Self-Governing Territories. The contents of the resolutions were only as relevant as the information received regarding the Territories. In that

(Mr. Tadesse, Ethiopia)

connection, the importance of the information provided by the administering Powers, and of the periodic assessments made possible by the dispatch of visiting missions, could not be overemphasized.

47. His delegation was convinced that the areas of consensus far outnumbered the areas of disagreement. It was essential to continue to broaden the areas of agreement and consensus in the interests of the peoples whose cause was championed by the Committee.

48. Ms. ESCOLAR (Colombia) said that her country upheld the inalienable right of all peoples to self-determination and independence affirmed in the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960. In connection with the situation in Western Sahara, she said that she approved of the proposal for a settlement put forward by the Secretary-General and that Colombia called on the Government of Morocco to promote the holding of a referendum and was co-operating with the Secretary-General on that question in every way.

49. Concerning the organization of work of the Special Committee, he noted the importance of discussing the issues before the Committee and the need to seek a way of enhancing the effectiveness of its work. Only thus would it be possible to complete the process of decolonization in the near future.

50. Mr. ARROSPIDE (Peru) underscored his country's unswerving commitment to the just cause of the peoples who were struggling to eradicate all forms of oppression. Peru, which had struggled against colonialism in its own territory, firmly supported the similar struggle of its brothers in other countries.

51. The process of democratization had been initiated in South Africa also, and had brought about, in particular, the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners and the legalization of the national liberation movements. Nevertheless, Peru expressed disappointment at the continued existence of the structure of apartheid, which prevented the achievement of a full victory for democracy in that country. The international community should take a firm stand on sanctions against the South African Government until such time as it received proof that a democratic, non-racial and united society had been established. Peru was firmly convinced that the apartheid régime could not be altered or reformed; it could only be dismantled.

52. Turning to the situation in Western Sahara, he commended the efforts of the Secretary-General and the activities of the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity to promote the self-determination and independence of the people of Western Sahara. In that regard he fully endorsed their proposal for a settlement by means of an agreement concerning the holding of a referendum. Peru was pleased to note that a dialogue had begun between the representatives of Morocco and of the Frente POLISARIO with the assistance of the Secretary-General; that was the best means of achieving a just and durable settlement of that problem in accordance with the Secretary-General's plan.

(Mr. Arrospide, Peru)

53. In the interest of achieving mutual understanding on all questions which were brought to it for consideration, the Committee should proceed by means of direct negotiations; in that connection, he expressed the hope that the opposing parties would give preference to dialogue as a means of resolving their differences on every issue. Unfortunately, the political developments that were currently taking place in the world, marked by the end of the cold war, were not being accompanied by corresponding changes in the social and economic spheres. The positive results of decolonization and democratization must be reflected in the adoption of measures aimed not only at ensuring adherence to the principles of self-determination and independence but also at alleviating the social and economic problems of the developing countries. It was necessary to lay the bases for the establishment of a more just international system whose corner-stone would be the dignity and welfare of the people.

54. Mr. SAVUA (Fiji) said that the Fourth Committee and the Special Committee on decolonization had played a major role in securing independence for former non-self-governing territories in accordance with the aspirations of their people. An important aspect of that role had been the vigilance exercised by the United Nations to ensure that independence, when granted, was reinforced in practice by full implementation by the administering Power of its obligations under the Charter. Unfortunately, the social and economic stability enjoyed upon independence had on occasion proved to be but a passing phenomenon.

55. Some people were of the view that the work of the Special Committee on decolonization was full of anachronisms and that, in essence, it had little more to do. He believed that the work of the Special Committee could not be diminished in any way so long as large numbers of people continued to live under colonialism. The Organization and the Committee still had an important trust to fulfil. Over the years, the two Committees and the Secretary-General had been assisted in their tasks by the administering Powers and he urged the latter to continue to fulfil their legal and moral obligations in that regard. Referring to the need for proper supervision of the self-determination process, he noted that the Secretary-General should continue the practice of dispatching United Nations visiting missions.

56. With regard to the activities of foreign economic interests, many enterprises while pursuing profits also contributed in very significant ways to the development of the host countries. He commended the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations for its efforts to smooth over differences between transnational corporations and host countries. Mention should also be made of the destabilizing influence of other foreign interests. Those factors tended to lie dormant during the early stages of an independent State's development only to appear later. A nation that was making its best efforts to sort out its difficult heritage should be given understanding and support.

57. Namibia's attainment of independence raised hopes that it would be possible to resolve all outstanding decolonization questions that currently seemed intractable. The people of Namibia needed the support of the entire international community.

(Mr. Savua, Fiji)

58. In his view, the resumption of diplomatic relations between Argentina and the United Kingdom boded well for the resolution of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) problem. It was necessary to support efforts to implement the settlement plan for Western Sahara. In that connection, he commended the increasing efforts by the Secretary-General to formulate a peace plan for that region. With regard to New Caledonia, his delegation expressed the hope that the French Government would hold steadfast to its undertaking and would see to it that that Territory achieved independence - if such was the will of its people - no later than 1998.

59. He expressed the fervent hope that colonialism would be eradicated by the end of the century and underscored the need to make every effort to achieve that goal and also to support in every possible way the proclamation of the 1990s as the Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

60. Mr. SMERAL (Czechoslovakia) said that, having seen the past successes of the United Nations, a number of States were currently wondering what should be the Organization's future role in the sphere of decolonization. His delegation believed that the United Nations must supervise the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples until the inhabitants of all remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories - irrespective of the size of their population, their geographical location or their natural resources - had decided on their own future.

61. A declaration of independence was not the only instrument by means of which the populations of Non-Self-Governing Territories might implement their right of self-determination. As provided for in General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 and especially 1541 (XV) of 15 December 1960, Non-Self-Governing Territories could also opt for a looser or closer association with the administering Power. That option could be chosen more frequently precisely in the case of the so-called small Non-Self-Governing Territories.

62. Czechoslovakia was a long-standing member of the Special Committee on decolonization, in which it had held the post of Vice-Chairman and also of Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Petitions, Information and Assistance. The Special Committee on decolonization retained its significance in verifying compliance by the administering Powers with their obligations under the Declaration. However, in changed circumstances, it was necessary to rethink the forms and methods of that Committee's work as well as the question of its operating costs. Furthermore, the Committee should not be allowed to be used by some members - as had happened in the past - for the assertion of specific political objectives having little to do with the actual process of decolonization.

63. The situation of the population of the remaining so-called small Territories was incomparably better than that of the colonial nations at the time of the adoption of the Declaration on decolonization. It was a fact that in most cases the administering Powers were honouring their obligations under the Declaration. Nevertheless, international supervision was still necessary in order not to lose sight of such problems as the one-sided development of the economies of the

(Mr. Smeral, Czechoslovakia)

Non-Self-Governing Territories, insufficient concern for preserving their cultural identity, the infiltration into them of drug trafficking, drug abuse and prostitution, the dumping of toxic wastes and the need to improve the level of education. The populations of the Non-Self-Governing Territories must be fully informed of the ways to implement their right to self-determination.

64. Concerning Western Sahara, it was very important that Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO, pursuant to Security Council resolution 658 (1990), were co-operating fully with the Secretary-General and the OAU Chairman in their efforts to find an early solution to the problem. If the Secretary-General's plan was put into effect and a decision made to set up a United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), Czechoslovakia was ready to participate in that peace-keeping operation.

65. His country welcomed the important steps taken by the Governments of the United Kingdom and Argentina towards full normalization of relations and felt that they could also enter into talks on the future of the Falkland Islands, as requested in the relevant resolutions of the Special Committee on decolonization and of the General Assembly.

66. At meetings of the Special Committee, the Czechoslovak delegation had stated repeatedly that the Committee's activities were no longer in keeping with the changing times. That was also true for the Sub-Committee on Small Territories. Czechoslovakia's comments should not be taken as a criticism of the Chairman of that Sub-Committee; its objections referred to the shortcomings in the work of the Sub-Committee as a whole. Every year the Sub-Committee prepared virtually identical reports that contained no suggestions regarding the destiny of the various Territories. They used outdated and confrontational language and their provisions exceeded the mandate not only of the Sub-Committee but also of the Special Committee. Their archaic method of work discouraged the administering Powers from participating in the work of the Special Committee. The question arose as to whether those countries that were trying hard to justify the current style of the Sub-Committee's work really believed that they helped improve the effectiveness of that and other United Nations decolonization bodies and the effectiveness of implementing the aims and objectives of the Declaration.

67. Mr. MOHAMMADI (Afghanistan) said that since the adoption of the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples the international community had witnessed significant progress towards decolonization. The Declaration was still normative for the remaining colonial Territories. While supporting the commitment of the United Nations to the eradication of colonialism in 18 small Non-Self-Governing Territories, Afghanistan noted that opportunities existed for expediting the complete and unconditional eradication of colonialism all over the world.

68. Afghanistan firmly believed that the recent positive developments in the international arena opened up possibilities for solving global problems for the benefit of all people without any discrimination. The role of the United Nations

(Mr. Mohammadi, Afghanistan)

in solving such world problems as the political settlement of disputes, the speedy eradication of colonialism and the condemnation of apartheid and racism had been enhanced.

69. His delegation welcomed the recent changes for the better in South Africa. The elimination of apartheid and racism depended on the further intensification of joint international efforts and on the sincerity of the South African Government in its intention to abandon the practice.

70. His delegation, which supported the resolutions of the Security Council, the General Assembly and OAU on the question of Western Sahara, felt that the issue could be decided only through goodwill and mutual understanding. Afghanistan supported the joint proposals of the Secretary-General and of OAU to conduct a referendum on self-determination in Western Sahara, and endorsed MINURSO.

71. While supporting the General Assembly resolutions on the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), his delegation fully agreed that continued negotiation between the concerned parties was the only way to find a peaceful, just and lasting solution to the question. His delegation appreciated the position of the Government of Argentina, which had confirmed its intention to comply with the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

72. Afghanistan viewed the historic changes in the world with optimism. There was an opportunity for the international community to accept joint responsibility for co-operation in the solution of global problems.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

FOURTH COMMITTEE
10th meeting
held on
22 October 1990
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 10th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ADOUKI (Congo)

later: Mr. ACOSTA-FRAGACHAN (Venezuela)
(Vice-Chairman)

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REQUEST FOR HEARING

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5 November 1990
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The meeting was called to order at 10:45 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (continued)

Question of Western Sahara

1. The CHAIRMAN said that Barbados, Guinea-Bissau and Nigeria had joined the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/45/L.2.

Hearing of Petitioners (A/C.4/45/3)

2. The CHAIRMAN reminded the Committee that it had been decided to grant the request for a hearing relating to the question of Western Sahara contained in document A/C.4/45/3.

3. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Brahim Mokhtar took a place at the petitioners' table.

4. Mr. MOKHTAR (Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra and Río de Oro) (Frente POLISARIO) said that the question of Western Sahara, which had been included in the agenda of the United Nations 25 years ago, continued to be an important unresolved issue in the decolonization of Africa. The invasion on 30 October 1975 of the Territory of Western Sahara by Moroccan troops in contravention of the norms of international law, had undermined the process of decolonization envisaged by the General Assembly. That act, by which the people of Western Sahara had been forcibly deprived of their right to self-determination, constituted an act of aggression, as defined in Assembly resolution 3314 (XXIX).

5. Between 1976 and 1984, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) had discussed the question of Western Sahara at great length. The inclusion of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic in OAU on 12 November 1984 had been proof of African countries' adherence to the principles of the OAU Charter and, in particular, to the right of peoples to self-determination and to inviolable frontiers. If the Moroccan Government had respected the will of African countries and legality, the conflict in Western Sahara would no longer be a matter of concern for the international community.

6. After the adoption of General Assembly resolution 40/50, Morocco had boycotted the Committee's consideration of the question of Western Sahara for two years. During that time, the illegal Moroccan presence in that country had grown to alarming proportions. There were currently 350,000 Moroccans in the Territory of Western Sahara, 100,000 of whom were members of the armed forces. The indigenous inhabitants of Western Sahara constituted a minority in the occupied zones, and they were subjected to systematic repression.

(Mr. Mokhtar)

7. In April 1986, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Chairman of OAU had begun a mission of good offices with a view to promoting a peaceful solution based on General Assembly resolution 40/50 and AHG/Res.104 (XIX) of OAU. The negative position of the Moroccan Government with respect to direct negotiations, to which those two resolutions referred, had impeded the rapid success of the mission. After two years of so-called indirect negotiations, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Chairman of OAU had prepared settlement proposals to which both sides had given their agreement in principle on 30 August 1988. The main objective of the proposals was to give the people of the Territory of Western Sahara the opportunity to exercise their right to self-determination and independence in conditions acceptable to it and, consequently, to the international community, through the organization of a fair and impartial referendum, without any military or administrative constraints. The joint proposals provided answers to two important questions. The first pertained to the participants in a future referendum. The second concerned the right to choose between independence and unification with Morocco.

8. On 4 January 1989, a meeting had taken place in Marrakesh between King Hassan II of Morocco and a high-level delegation of the Frente POLISARIO. The Frente had immediately declared a unilateral cease-fire, which had lasted for many months; however, the Moroccan Government had broken off the dialogue. Nevertheless, the Frente had continued to set great hopes on the mission of good offices and, in response to the Secretary-General's appeal, the authorities of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic had declared another unilateral cease-fire in order to help create a favourable climate on the eve of the Secretary-General's second visit to the countries of the region, which had taken place in April 1990.

9. The result of those persistent efforts had been the Secretary-General's submission to the Security Council, in accordance with Council resolution 621 (1988), of a plan to implement the proposals, which was agreed upon by both sides and approved by Council resolution 658 (1990). Several days later, the Secretary-General had considered it expedient to bring together at Geneva under his auspices the delegations of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO in order to hasten the removal of existing obstacles and to create the necessary atmosphere of confidence between the two sides so that they could proceed to implement the proposals. The Government of Morocco had refused to take part in a direct dialogue

10. Unfortunately, the recent statement by King Hassan II on 13 October 1990, and also the Moroccan Government's memorandum of 15 October 1990 addressed to the Secretary-General, not only demonstrated the hypocrisy of the Moroccan authorities but also posed an obvious threat to everything which had so far been achieved. The Frente POLISARIO therefore called on the international community to spare no effort to strengthen and defend the plan for a settlement, and declared its readiness to co-operate fully with the Secretary-General and the Chairman of OAU in order to ensure the success of their noble mission to promote peace in Western Sahara.

11. Mr. Brahim Mokhtar withdrew.

12. Mr. Acosta-Fragachán (Venezuela), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

Question of Gibraltar

13. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to the draft text of consensus contained in document A/C.4/45/L.3.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (continued) (A/45/23 (Part VI); A/AC.109/1015 and Corr.1, A/AC.109/1016-1021, 1023 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/AC.109/1024-1036, 1041 and Corr.1, A/AC.109/1044 and 1048 and Corr.1/Rev.1)

AGENDA ITEM 111: INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES TRANSMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 73 e OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/45/23 (Part V) and A/45/559)

AGENDA ITEM 113: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/45/3 (chaps. I and VI (sect. D)), A/45/23 (Part V) and A/45/309; A/AC.109/L.1740; E/1990/72)

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued) (A/45/3 (chaps. I and VI (sect. D)))

AGENDA ITEM 114: UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA (continued) (A/45/553)

AGENDA ITEM 115: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (continued) (A/45/560)

General debate (continued)

14. Mr. ZAMORA (Cuba) said that the plan for the establishment of peace in Western Sahara which had originated in General Assembly resolution 40/50 and resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX) of the Organization of African Unity gave grounds for the hope that a peaceful process would take place in Western Sahara which would shortly enable the population of that territory finally to realize its desire for self-government and independence.

15. In his delegation's view, the conditions for the successful completion of the process now begun had been laid down; many of the obstacles to the attainment of independence by Western Sahara had been overcome, and the Secretary-General's last report to the Security Council (S/21360) gave grounds for considerable optimism. Cuba had voted in favour of Security Council resolution 658 (1990), and fully supported the Secretary-General's plan for a settlement. It also endorsed the results of the meeting of Western Saharan leaders held in Geneva in June 1990 under the Secretary-General's auspices. However, the peace process had not yet been completed, and if the remaining difficulties were not overcome, the effort undertaken by the international community over the last five years to secure the independence and self-determination of Western Sahara might still be frustrated. The Secretary-General had indicated the problems it was necessary to resolve in

(Mr. Zamora, Cuba)

order to carry out his peace plan. It was, firstly, necessary to fix the number of Moroccan troops who would remain in the territory during the period of the referendum. His delegation considered that the fewer they were the more freely the people of Western Sahara would be able to express their will in the referendum and the greater the possibility of carrying out the Secretary-General's plan successfully. Secondly, it was necessary to define the role of the police and the status of the Moroccan settlers in the territory; both sides would also have to agree on the rules for the conduct of the referendum, which must be strictly adhered to. Cuba was convinced that the way to overcome the difficulties still impeding the completion of the settlement plan lay through direct dialogue between the parties under the auspices of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity. It welcomed the sending of the Secretary-General's technical mission to the territory and other neighbouring countries to collect the information required for the establishment and deployment of the United Nations mission for the referendum in Western Sahara which would supervise the referendum and thus guarantee that it would be held with complete freedom and justice.

16. Mr. PHETSAVAN (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that the progressive reduction over the past years of the number of items on the General Assembly's agenda pertaining to the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples clearly illustrated how decisive the action of the international community had been thus far in working towards the complete and final elimination of colonialism in all its forms and manifestations. The deletion of those items also meant that several more sovereign and independent nations had now taken their rightful place in the community of nations.

17. In the course of its recent special meeting commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the General Assembly had commended the magnificent results of the Declaration, which had led to in the accession by millions of human beings to freedom and dignity, expressed its conviction that the Declaration would continue to play an important role as a source of inspiration and a spur to action for colonial peoples, and had reaffirmed its determination definitively to eliminate colonialism, the great obstacle to peace, progress and international co-operation. Thanks to the stimulus provided by the Declaration, Namibia had acceded to independence during the current year.

18. In spite of the considerable progress achieved in the process of decolonization, millions of people in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean were still suffering under colonial oppression and domination. The international community must not lose sight of the state of the Micronesian and Western Saharan peoples and the peoples of small Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Pacific, Caribbean and other regions of the world.

19. His delegation reiterated its appeal to the administering Powers to fulfil their obligations under the Charter by guaranteeing the economic, social and cultural development of the Territories under their domination and creating the necessary political conditions to enable those people rapidly to accede to national independence. Moreover, military bases, which were a genuine obstacle to the

(Mr. Phetsavan, Lao People's Democratic Republic)

implementation of the Declaration, should be completely and rapidly dismantled and there must be an end to the policy of fragmentation pursued by certain administering Powers, particularly in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

20. Mrs. TAHIR-KHELI (United States of America) announced that the United States would vote against the proposed resolution. While her Government had considered the possibility of amending the resolution in order to produce a consensus text, it had concluded that the text was beyond repair.

21. The unacceptable draft before the Committee had been the cause of extensive discussion and disagreement in the Special Committee, and as a result agreement had not been achieved. One quarter of the Special Committee's membership had formally objected to amendments introduced in the Committee's plenary session, as a result of which name calling and extraneous issues previously eliminated had been reintroduced into the resolution. Many other delegations had informally expressed their dissatisfaction with the draft. Her delegation had considered that it would be useful to substitute for the language of the draft that used in the resolution on the same subject which had been adopted virtually unanimously at the July 1990 meeting of the Economic and Social Council.

22. On reflection, however, her Government had been persuaded by the arguments of a number of members of the Fourth Committee that with the attainment of independence by Namibia discussions of apartheid no longer had a place in Fourth Committee resolutions. While it continued to oppose apartheid with the same vigour and to endorse the efforts of the United Nations to promote a negotiating process in South Africa, her delegation considered that the problem of apartheid should henceforth be considered not in the Fourth Committee but in the plenary meetings of the General Assembly.

23. The United States could not let the subject pass without protesting the willingness of the majority of the Special Committee's membership to go along with name-calling language. The argument that such language should be supported in order to preserve consensus did not hold water, since in fact it was the language of the draft before the Committee that had created the chief obstacle to consensus. If the Fourth Committee adopted the draft resolution, it would be voting for the old United Nations. The United States would speak out against that outmoded pattern of behaviour wherever it appeared.

24. Her delegation hoped that those who recognized the urgent need for change would make their views known and join with it in voting against the resolution, and that the progressive forces in the Committee would join together in sending a clear message that Fourth Committee resolutions must be amended or entirely reworked in order to converge with the thinking of the United Nations.

25. Mr. TREXLER (Italy), speaking on behalf of the European Community, said that the proclamation during the current year of the independence of Namibia had been a landmark in the process of decolonization. The Community and its twelve member States once more expressed their profound satisfaction at the successful completion of a political process - the transition of Namibia to independence - they had strongly supported and to which they had actively contributed.

26. The Twelve had followed with particular attention the developments in Western Sahara and welcomed the adoption of Security Council resolution 658 (1990), which endorsed the report of the Secretary-General containing the settlement proposals as accepted by the two parties on 30 August 1988 as well as an outline of the plan presented by the Secretary-General in order to implement those proposals.

27. The Twelve hoped that the Security Council would soon be able to adopt a further resolution authorizing the launching of the United Nations operation which should lead to the exercise of self-determination by the people of Western Sahara. The Twelve also hoped that the two parties would fully endeavour to co-operate with the Secretary-General, and that in 1990 the General Assembly would again be in a position to adopt a consensus resolution on Western Sahara.

28. The Twelve were closely following the developments in East Timor, including the human rights situation. They reiterated their support for the contacts between Portugal and Indonesia under the auspices of the Secretary-General. They hoped that a just, comprehensive and internationally acceptable solution could soon be achieved.

29. In the light of the progress made in decolonization, the Twelve believed that the time had come to look seriously at the work of the Fourth Committee. Its agenda was largely complete, and it had become increasingly captive to ideas and procedures that bore little relationship to reality. It was not acceptable for the Committee to be presented with texts which could not be negotiated or influenced and which made it look like the last outpost of frozen ideology in the United Nations.

30. The substance of the drafts submitted to the Committee in 1990 appeared in some cases actually worse than those submitted in 1989. A particularly striking example of redundancy and artificial inflation of the work of the Committee was the continued reference to apartheid and the policy of the South African Government in the draft resolutions, after Namibian independence had rendered irrelevant the consideration of such matters in the context of decolonization. Furthermore, the language proposed appeared biased and anachronistic, in that it neither reflected the consensus language on apartheid adopted by the General Assembly in December 1989 and in September 1990, nor took into account the changes that had occurred in South Africa over the past year.

31. There was a risk that that might render the Committee's work irrelevant. The Twelve believed that before the 1991 session, all States should look very seriously at the Fourth Committee's agenda and procedures.

(Mr. Trexler, Italy)

32. The Twelve hoped that serious efforts would be made in the future to shorten the draft resolutions submitted by the Special Committee, to eliminate language and concepts that were outdated and unnecessarily contentious, to present documents, reports and texts more concisely, with emphasis on aspects that were the subject of precise recommendations, and to avoid the duplication of work between the sub-committees, the Special Committee and the Fourth Committee, namely in the hearing of petitioners. In that context, the Twelve emphasized the need to respect the recommendations in the report of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations, as approved by the General Assembly in resolution 41/213.

33. Mr. VAN LIEROP (Vanuatu), speaking on behalf of the States members of the South Pacific Forum, said that at the most recent meeting of the Forum, held at Port Vila, Vanuatu, from 31 July to 1 August 1990, the region's heads of Government had expressed their satisfaction with Namibia's successful transition to political independence.

34. Noting the many achievements of the decolonization process, he said that the process could reach a successful conclusion only by the continuation of the broad international consensus in favour of the universal realization of the right of all peoples to self-determination and independence.

35. All members of the international community had a vital stake in the successful completion of the decolonization process. Freedom was the birthright of all, regardless of the size or location of respective countries, regardless of wealth or the abundance of natural resources, and regardless of race, ethnic identity, religion or national language.

36. It was within that frame of reference that the South Pacific Forum viewed the Territories which remained on the agenda of the United Nations as Non-Self-Governing Territories. In particular, that was the frame of reference within which it viewed the question of New Caledonia.

37. At the recent meeting, the Forum had noted the positive measures being pursued in New Caledonia by the French authorities, in co-operation with all sectors of the population, to promote political, economic and social development in the Territory, in order to provide a framework for its peaceful evolution to self-determination. There had also been an acknowledgement of the close links between the people of New Caledonia, particularly the indigenous Kanaks, and other peoples of the South Pacific. In that connection, the Forum had urged that the Secretary-General of the United Nations, or a specially designated representative, should visit, at the outset of the Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, each of the Territories remaining on the United Nations list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. The Forum had also expressed the hope that the French authorities, and others, would further expand their assistance with regard to education and training opportunities for the Kanak population, in order to enable all New Caledonians to exercise their right of self-determination under the best possible conditions.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

38. Turning to the draft resolution on New Caledonia in document A/45/23 (Part VI), he said that the seven members of the South Pacific Forum were pleased that the Special Committee on decolonization had adopted the text by consensus and had recommended its adoption by the Fourth Committee. The Forum unreservedly supported the draft and urged its adoption by consensus.

39. Ms. LYNNE VAN ANTWERPEN (Namibia) said that 1990 marked not only the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), but also the independence of Namibia. However, although Namibian independence had at long last been achieved, there were still Territories under the yoke of colonial domination and oppression. In that connection, her delegation attached the highest importance to the work of the Fourth Committee and the Special Committee, and urged them, together with other organs, to intensify their efforts to eradicate the horrors of colonialism from the planet.

40. Her Government continued to be deeply concerned that although there had been some recent positive developments, some pillars of apartheid remained intact. It hoped that there would soon be earnest negotiations concerning a non-racial, democratic and united South Africa.

41. On the question of Western Sahara, Namibia supported the heroic struggle of the Frente POLISARIO for self-determination and independence. Her Government had recognized the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic and had established diplomatic relations with it. Namibia wanted a just and definitive solution to the question of Western Sahara, and fully supported resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX) of the Organization of African Unity, resolution 40/50 of the United Nations General Assembly and resolution 658 (1990) of the Security Council. Her Government welcomed the direct talks between the King of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO. Namibia was encouraged by the agreed set of proposals and the timetable for their implementation, as well as by the plan providing for the holding of a referendum on self-determination in Western Sahara, under the supervision of the United Nations and in co-operation with the Organization of African Unity.

42. The draft resolution on Western Sahara before the Fourth Committee reflected the level of progress already achieved and pointed the way towards a settlement of the conflict. Her delegation was one of the sponsors of the draft resolution, and called on all members of the Committee to support it, for it was only with their collective support that the Saharan people would be able to assume their rightful place in the assembly of nations.

43. Mrs. APONTE (Venezuela) said that the Special Committee played an important role, within the framework of United Nations activities in the field of decolonization, in the efforts of the international community to secure the implementation of the Declaration. She noted that the Special Committee encountered many difficulties in carrying out its mandate, one being the lack of information on the Non-Self-Governing Territories which should be transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations. Moreover, her delegation emphasized that it was essential to send periodic United Nations missions to the

(Mrs. Aponte, Venezuela)

colonial Territories, since such missions were an effective way of evaluating the situation in those Territories, and it called upon the administering Powers to continue to co-operate with the United Nations in that regard.

44. She expressed great appreciation for the work done by the Special Committee on decolonization during the current year and cited as examples the seminar for the Asia/Pacific region held in Port Vila, Vanuatu, from 9 to 11 May 1990, and the seminar for the Caribbean region held in Bridgetown, Barbados, from 19 to 21 June 1990. She expressed the hope that a seminar on the question of the dissemination of information on decolonization would be held at United Nations Headquarters early in 1991. In her delegation's view, the main aim of such seminars was to analyse the specific problems of the Non-Self-Governing Territories so that activities relating to decolonization could be improved and streamlined.

45. The United Nations must continue to play an important role in the process of decolonization and intensify its efforts to ensure the widest possible dissemination of information on the question of decolonization. Her delegation expressed the hope that, through the full implementation of the principle of the self-determination of peoples, the world would be rid of the yoke of colonialism by the year 2000.

46. Mr. DENU (Ghana) said that the United Nations had achieved its greatest successes in the area of decolonization. Thirty years after the adoption of the Declaration on decolonization, more than 50 countries had been liberated from colonial domination. The most recent success by the United Nations in that area was the attainment of independence by Namibia. There were, however, still 18 Territories under colonial domination which deserved United Nations support. The time had come to adopt new strategies and approaches with a view to achieving total decolonization by the year 2000. The greatest weakness of the Organization was perhaps its inability to enforce implementation of its resolutions; that in turn was due to the lack of the necessary penalties which would give those resolutions the force of law. Efforts should now focus on finding practical solutions to problems, however painful they might be to some Member States.

47. His delegation noted with deep regret that during the current year two administering Powers had refused to participate in the Special Committee's deliberations concerning Territories under their administration. That had deprived the United Nations of valuable information which was required under General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV).

48. The Committee should organize its work in such a way as to allow for more informal consultations on the recommendations of the Special Committee in order to encourage the adoption of important decisions and resolutions by consensus.

49. Factors such as territorial size, geographical location, size of population and limited natural resources should in no way impede the exercise by the people of their inalienable right to self-determination and independence. His delegation was concerned that the administering Powers were not creating, in the Territories under their administration, the conditions which would enable the peoples of those

(Mr. Denu, Ghana)

Territories to determine freely their future political and economic status. The attempts of the administering Powers to donate huge financial aid to the Territories under their administration gave the peoples of those Territories a false sense of a high standard of living and thus posed a serious threat to their future self-determination.

50. In conclusion, his delegation commended the activities of the specialized agencies, in particular the World Health Organization (WHO), which had responded positiviely to General Assembly resolution 44/85 by collaborating with the Territories concerned in providing such services as health care and technical and managerial assistance and food aid.

51. Mr. OCAMPO (Philippines) said that, at a time of rapid change in the world, with the formation of a new international order, it was essential to build a new society, based on principles of justice, in which there would be no place for racism or war and in which no one group of people would subjugate and colonize another and all would live in conditions of freedom, equality and respect for dignity and human rights. It was to such a society that the colonial peoples aspired.

52. The attainment of independence by Namibia on the eve of the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on decolonization, which had seemed an almost impossible goal, gave grounds for hope that colonialism and its remaining vestiges would be eradicated before the end of the century. The principles of the Declaration applied equally to the remaining 18 Non-Self-Governing Territories, despite their relatively small size, the small size of their population and their limited natural resources. In that connection, the United Nations should intensify co-operation with the administering Powers to ensure that the institutions necessary for their functioning as independent entities after independence were set up in the Territories. The international community should pay greater attention to the specific conditions in individual Territories, which were at different levels of political, socio-economic and constitutional development.

53. His country followed with interest developments in New Caledonia and the progress in the implementation of the Matignon and Rue Oudinot Agreements. The differences expressed with regard to those Agreements showed that the indigenous population did not view the question of self-determination with complacency. His delegation hoped that, before the referendum on self-determination was held, conditions would be fully established to enable the New Caledonians to participate in the economic, political and social life of the Territory on a basis of equality.

54. His delegation strongly supported the mission of good offices of the Secretary-General and the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity aimed at reaching a just and comprehensive solution to the question of Western Sahara. It shared the view of the Secretary-General that the settlement of the question had entered a decisive stage. It noted the approval by the Security Council in June of a plan for the holding of a referendum in Western Sahara and hoped that the sending of a special mission to the Territory and to neighbouring countries would make it

(Mr. Ocampo, Philippines)

possible to refine the administrative aspects of the proposed plan and, inter alia, prepare the basis for the authorization by the Security Council of the establishment of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara. His delegation would support efforts directed towards the consolidation of peace and stability in that region and hoped that the draft resolution on the issue before the Fourth Committee would again be adopted by consensus.

55. Mr. WISNUMURTI (Indonesia) said that, during the 30 years since the adoption of the Declaration on decolonization, advances in the field of decolonization had had a vital impact on the transformation of the global political landscape. The elimination of foreign domination and the emergence of a large number of independent States could rightly be acclaimed as one of the unparalleled achievements of the United Nations. In few other areas could the Organization point to such impressive successes in the realization of principles embodied in its Charter. The attainment of independence by Namibia was eloquent testimony to its outstanding achievements. That event had had a salutary effect on developments in southern Africa, where it appeared that the Pretoria régime was moving with greater seriousness to meet the legitimate aspirations of the majority in the country. On the question of Western Sahara, his delegation was encouraged by the progress that had been made and was convinced that a peaceful solution would be found, with the co-operation of all the parties concerned.

56. With regard to the Non-Self-Governing Territories, despite their unique problems and weak infrastructure, special attention should be focused on the particular difficulties relating to the exercise of their inalienable right to self-determination; in particular, the administering Powers should effectively protect the economic interests of those Territories from exploitation by foreign interests.

57. As for the plight of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, the urgent task of the international community was to secure Israel's withdrawal from all occupied Arab lands. In that context, the settlement of new immigrants not only did not help to defuse an already volatile situation, but still further aggravated the Middle East conflict. With regard to the most recent incident, his delegation fully supported Security Council reolution 672 (1990) and the decision of the Secretary-General to send a fact-finding mission to the region.

REQUEST FOR HEARING

58. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that a communication had been received containing a request for a hearing in connection with the Committee's consideration of the question of Tokelau under agenda item 18. He proposed that, in accordance with established practice, the communication should be circulated as a document of the Committee for consideration at a later meeting.

59. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

FOURTH COMMITTEE
11th meeting
held on
Tuesday, 23 October 1990
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 11th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. AL-KINDI (United Arab Emirates)
(Vice-Chairman)

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AGENDA ITEM 115: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (continued)

General debate

AGENDA ITEM 119: PROGRAMME PLANNING

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Al-Kindi (United Arab Emirates), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

REQUESTS FOR HEARINGS (A/C.4/45/8)

1. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had before it document A/C.4/45/8 containing a request for a hearing on the question of Tokelau. If there were no objections, he would take it that the Committee agreed to the request.

2. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (continued)

Question of Tokelau

Hearing of petitioners (A/C.4/45/8)

3. The CHAIRMAN said that the petitioner whose request for a hearing in document A/C.4/45/8 had just been granted by the Committee was prepared to make his statement.

4. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. González-González took a place at the petitioners' table.

5. Mr. GONZALEZ-GONZALEZ said that where decolonization was concerned, the extent of reductions in unemployment in Territories under foreign rule, the number of new schools built and the nature of constitutions which the administering Powers allowed the oppressed Territories to adopt were quite immaterial, for even the most fortunate colonies were still colonies.

6. As representatives in the Fourth Committee had probably noted, none of the documents under consideration set any deadlines for the liberation of the colonial Territories; none of them referred to the need to put pressure on the administering Powers to free colonial peoples from the many years of domination. Until that was done, the administering Powers would continue to get away with empty promises and hollow pronouncements in the United Nations.

7. The fact that there were problems even between Tokelau and New Zealand, the only imperialist country that enjoyed definite support in the Special Committee on Decolonization, raised the question as to what was happening with respect to other colonies, particularly those of the United States and the United Kingdom, which refused to participate in the Special Committee's work. In the case of Puerto Rico, for example, the leaders of three major Puerto Rican parties had sent a letter, on 17 January 1989, to the President of the United States and several

(Mr. González-González)

Congressmen, pointing out that the United States had never officially sought the views of the Puerto Rican people regarding their legal and political status. That showed that the United Nations had been wrong to accede to the United States request to exclude Puerto Rico from the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. After the letter had been sent, there had been a definite movement within the United States to give the Puerto Rican people a free hand in determining their destiny. It was also clear, however, that the United States Government hoped to deceive the United Nations again, as in the case of the 1952 plebiscite, and deny the Puerto Rican people an opportunity to exercise their right to independence and self-determination.

8. If that was happening with regard to a fairly large and developed Territory, one could only imagine what was happening with regard to smaller Territories. Tokelau was an exception, and when it became independent, it would of course maintain its relations with New Zealand. Likewise, other liberated Territories would not be isolated; assistance would be provided by the former administering Powers, various organizations, the United Nations and the entire world.

9. In conclusion, he called on New Zealand, which was regarded as a model administering Power, to set an example and declare Tokelau to be a free, sovereign and independent country, so that its people might freely determine their destiny.

10. Mr. González-González withdrew.

Question of Western Sahara

11. The CHAIRMAN announced that Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Ecuador and Yemen had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/45/L.2.

AGENDA ITEM 114: UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA (continued)

Introduction of draft resolution

12. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to draft resolution A/C.4/45/L.5.

13. Mr. HUSLID (Norway), speaking as Chairman of the Advisory Committee on the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa, introduced draft resolution A/C.4/45/L.5 and announced that Djibouti, Pakistan, Senegal and Tunisia had joined the sponsors.

14. With regard to the significance and scope of the Programme, he said that more than 8,000 students had completed their studies in a variety of disciplines in over 30 countries. As stated in the Secretary-General's report (A/45/553), the Programme was giving new awards only to South African students and, during a transitional period following Namibia's accession to independence, Namibian students. Many Namibians who had been trained under the Programme were assuming leading positions in government, business, education and other sectors.

(Mr. Huslid, Norway)

15. In accordance with the recommendations prepared after the thorough evaluation of the Programme in the autumn of 1989, the Programme had adopted a cost-effective allocation of resources, and had a clearly defined and up-to-date list of priority fields of study geared to meet the current and prospective manpower needs of South Africa.

16. The Programme had further streamlined its administrative procedures, and was actively involved in devising new mechanisms to promote the returnability and employability of graduates. Should former South African political prisoners require educational and technical training abroad, the Programme stood ready to consider such applications.

17. The Programme was more prepared than ever to make its contribution in the United Nations effort to promote a negotiated settlement of the conflict in South Africa. It could do so by continuing to prepare the large cadre of black, trained South Africans that was so critically needed for a smooth transition to a post-apartheid South Africa. The Programme currently sponsored 361 students from Namibia and 839 students from South Africa studying in 30 countries. It hoped that it could continue to count on generous contributions from Member States.

18. He requested those countries whose bilateral aid programmes were directed only to developing countries to make an exception for South Africa, in view of the desperate economic and social situation of the black majority and its urgent needs in terms of eligibility for education and training abroad.

19. He appealed to bilateral and multilateral agencies to co-operate further with the Programme. It was gratifying to note that Governments, organizations and educational institutions everywhere were prepared to demonstrate solidarity with young South Africans in need of education abroad. He hoped that the draft resolution could be adopted unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (continued) (A/45/23 (Parts V and VI), A/45/644 and Corr.1; A/C.4/45/L.2, L.3; A/AC.109/1015 and Corr.1, A/AC.109/1016 and Corr.1, A/AC.109/1017-1021, A/AC.109/1023 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/AC.109/1024-1036, A/AC.109/1038, A/AC.109/1041 and Corr.1, A/AC.109/1044, A/AC.109/1048 and Corr.1/Rev.1)

AGENDA ITEM 111: INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES TRANSMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 73 e OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/45/23 (Parts V and VI), A/45/559)

AGENDA ITEM 113: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/45/3 (Parts I and VI, Sect. D), A/45/23 (Part V), A/45/309; A/AC.109/L.1740; E/1990/72)

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued) (A/45/3, chaps. I and VI (sect. D))

AGENDA ITEM 114: UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA (continued) (A/45/553)

AGENDA ITEM 115: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (continued) (A/45/560)

General debate

20. Mr. O'BRIEN (New Zealand) said that the process of self-determination, as evidenced by the accession to independence of Namibia and the changes in southern Africa and Europe remained a vital force. However, problems relating to the decolonization process persisted and, as had been noted at the two regional seminars on decolonization sponsored by the Special Committee on decolonization in Vanuatu and Barbados, the remaining colonial Territories merited the closest attention. It had been stated at the Seminars that secure economic foundations were the key to real political freedom. That was not, of course, to equate full political independence with full economic independence. In an interdependent world, full economic independence for any individual State was an illusion. It was also stated at the Seminars that such problems as foreign economic exploitation, insensitive development of tourism and drug trafficking and various environmental problems - nuclear testing, the harmful effects of the disposal of toxic wastes, the devastation caused by drift-net fishing - severely restricted economic autonomy and choice.

21. His country's interest in the item before the Committee was the product of geographical considerations. New Zealand was part of a region where the process of nation-building was continuing. That was why the question was reviewed each year by the Special Committee and one of its Sub-Committees. As a special representative of the Parliament and people of Tokelau had informed the Sub-Committee, Tokelau was expanding its co-operation with New Zealand and, with New Zealand's support, was gradually developing its political institutions. The special representative had pointed out that the experience of decolonization in the South Pacific had been varied and largely without violence. Not all Territories had chosen the path of full independence. In order to foster political and other forms of development, however, the peoples themselves of the Territories concerned must decide the form of their self-determination. That was the principle which must guide the United Nations, the Fourth Committee and the Special Committee in determining a proper approach to the process of decolonization in the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

22. The situation in New Caledonia was also characterized by the aspiration to self-determination to be found in the Pacific island region. New Zealand considered that the process of self-determination in New Caledonia should take place in accordance with the principles and practices of the United Nations. The year 1988 had seen the signing by France and political groups in New Caledonia of the Matignon Accords, which had provided the basis for stability and co-operative endeavour both within New Caledonia itself and between the Territory and its island neighbours. New Zealand would closely follow the implementation of the Accords, and expressed the hope that the provisions they contained for general financial

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

assistance would have a favourable impact on economic development. It could not be denied that a very large part of the Kanak people of New Caledonia wanted full independence. New Zealand considered it essential that the advantages and drawbacks of various options of self-determination should be explained to all New Caledonians as preparations proceeded for the referendum.

23. In conclusion, he urged that the resolutions adopted by the Committee should reflect current needs and realities, and that greater efforts should be made to achieve consensus. His delegation considered that the most fitting tribute on the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on decolonization would be to draw inspiration in 1991 from the many experiences of decolonization to date and to develop, during the last decade of the century, fresh approaches in which the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories were paramount.

24. Mr. TEO (Singapore) said that the Fourth Committee had helped to perform one of the most important tasks of the past 45 years, that of decolonization. One of its most recent successes had undoubtedly been the accession to independence of Namibia.

25. As a small country and a former colony, Singapore fully understood the aspiration of the peoples of small, dependent Territories to exercise their right to self-determination and independence. Currently, despite the fact that the decolonization process was virtually complete and that the world's population was increasing dramatically, almost 2 million people remained under colonial rule. Singapore hoped that, by the year 2000, the colonial epoch would be no more than a memory.

26. As the atmosphere of cold war dispersed, a new world order was dawning. In that context, he recalled that, as far back as 1966, the then French President, General Charles de Gaulle, had put forward his famous "triad" of "entente, détente, co-opération" during a visit to Moscow. The world at long last had a unique opportunity to use de Gaulle's ideals to lay the foundation for a new world order. Advantage must be taken of the current favourable atmosphere to work towards a peaceful political solution of the problems of the remaining colonies, for example in the South Pacific. His delegation noted that some progress had been made two years previously in paving the way for the independence of New Caledonia by the end of the millennium.

27. His delegation also welcomed such positive developments as the Secretary-General's efforts to mediate in the case of Western Sahara. It hoped that a peace agreement between Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO would lead to the holding of a free and fair referendum and to the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

28. Despite those positive developments, his delegation was disturbed by an emerging trend which might be described as neo-colonialism in a disguised form. He was referring to the efforts of some countries to impose direct rule or exert influence over smaller neighbouring States through the use of force. A recent

(Mr. Teo, Singapore)

example was the Iraqi invasion, occupation and annexation of Kuwait. As the winds of détente swept across the planet and the super-Powers disengaged from regional conflicts, new regional forces might attempt to fill the resulting political vacuum. That new form of hegemony could not be condoned, and the same action must be taken to counter it as was taken against the dominance of the super-Powers.

29. As a parallel trend, economic dominance was fast replacing political domination. On the verge of the twenty-first century, direct military intervention and occupation might be giving way to subtler ways of exerting economic pressure over small States, for example through pressure, coercion or market exclusion. As economics supplanted ideology as the basis for inter-State relations, such concerns would increase for countries with weak and vulnerable economies. The prospect that a country might be transformed into an economic colony was just as unacceptable as its transformation into any other form of colony. Another increasing concern was the bleak prospect that a country might be pressured by economic factors into joining an economic or trading bloc which was dominated by a country with a strong economy.

30. The world was rapidly changing, and, he believed, the time had come to undertake a serious review of the Committee's new role in the future. He raised the question whether the Committee should continue with polemical debates on issues of decolonization which had lost their significance, or whether it should resolutely re-examine its mandate with a view to the future. Dynamically developing institutions should constantly adapt their organizational structures to a changing world. It was in that context that the Committee must closely re-examine its primary objectives and tasks in preparing itself for the challenges of the future, including AIDS, the environment, drugs and the transfer of science and technology, which would have a significant impact on the development of former colonies.

31. While the thought of a completely new agenda might be too daunting, it might be possible simply to redefine colonialism and to combat its new forms with a view to eliminating them. It was in his view obvious that some States, in the complex web of intricate international relations, might at one time or another consider themselves entitled to influence or to intervene in the internal affairs of other States. Colonialism might be dressed in new clothes and might take different shapes and forms.

32. At the dawn of a new international order the international community must, like the Soviet President, Mikhail Gorbachev, embark on "new political thinking", on "a revolution in thinking" - the concept which the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Eduard Shevardnadze, had recently termed the new philosophy. namely "the philosophy of action".

33. Mr. KADRAT (Iraq), speaking on a point of order, said that the comment made by the previous speaker with regard to relations between Iraq and Kuwait was irrelevant to the items under consideration. Although the agenda of the General Assembly contained an item on the situation between Iraq and Kuwait, it was not one

(Mr. Kadrat, Iraq)

of the items allocated to the Fourth Committee. He therefore suggested that speakers should keep to the matter in hand.

34. Ms. AL-MULLA (Kuwait), speaking on a point of order, said that the representative of Iraq was in fact speaking in exercise of the right of reply, and she suggested that the Committee should proceed to hear the remaining speakers on the list. At the same time, she thanked the representative of Iraq for reminding the Committee that the agenda of the General Assembly included, at the suggestion of the delegation of Kuwait, an item on the situation between Iraq and Kuwait.

35. Mr. LAMAMRA (Algeria) said that, after the adoption of the historic General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), many peoples currently represented in the Committee had swelled the ranks of the liberated countries, at great cost of human life and thanks to the growing solidarity on the part of the United Nations. Resolution 1514 (XV) had become the basis of an approach whereby the last word must always be left to the peoples themselves, which enjoyed an exclusive right to sovereignty over their Territories in complete freedom to express their will to determine their own future and the future of their countries. On every occasion when it had been the duty of the United Nations to pave the way for a genuine act of self-determination, it had always had recourse to a referendum, to be conducted in optimal conditions of freedom, openness and trust which would enable the people to express its wishes. His country was deeply convinced that the principle of free expression of the people's will applied universally and in all circumstances.

36. The General Assembly, which had been kept duly informed by the Fourth Committee, had, with praiseworthy persistence over almost three decades, upheld the inalienable right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination. The concept of a peaceful settlement had been arrived at in the interests of achieving full implementation of that principle, which was being fulfilled by means of a novel and effective mechanism whereby the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Secretary-General of the United Nations had jointly made available their good offices. As a result of the significant progress achieved in June 1989 there was now a decisive prospect of reaching a peaceful settlement. His delegation expressed its satisfaction at the prospect of a speedy, equitable and lasting settlement of the fratricidal conflict in Western Sahara, based on the peace plan approved by the Security Council in its resolution 658 (1990).

37. The report submitted by the Secretary-General to the Security Council in June 1989, and the report submitted for consideration at the current session of the General Assembly, gave the international community the opportunity to ascertain what stage the peace process had reached. In addition, they provided some valuable guidelines for the measures still to be taken in order to achieve a definitive formulation and implementation of a peace settlement.

38. With regard to the Saharan people's demands for freedom, openness and peace in the holding of a referendum, to be conducted without administrative or military constraints, the two reports emphasized the importance of the specific decisions

(Mr. Lamamra, Algeria)

yet to be taken. First and foremost, that involved applying the principle, accepted by both sides, of an "appropriate, substantial and phased" reduction in Moroccan troops. In addition, three issues arose in connection with the referendum: they had been mentioned by the Secretary-General in his report and had been the subject of talks during his meetings in Geneva in July 1990 with the plenipotentiaries of both parties. Those issues were the following: the rules of conduct to be followed during the referendum campaign, the continued suspension of military operations by the Frente POLISARIO, and the prospect of direct talks between the parties under the auspices of the Secretary-General. Finally, the authority of the Security Council was needed for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) to commence its work.

39. A just and lasting settlement of the conflict in Western Sahara would undoubtedly, in the new, favourable international climate, help to enhance the authority of and trust in the United Nations, and would provide an effective framework for harmonizing and focusing the efforts of States in behalf of universal peace and progress. At the same time, such a settlement would give decisive momentum to the cause of unity among the Maghreb countries. By fulfilling its obligations to Western Sahara, the United Nations, in collaboration with OAU, would help to strengthen the foundations for collective action by the Maghreb countries which would in turn exemplify the principles affirmed in the Charter of the United Nations.

40. Mr. SUPHAMONGKHON (Thailand) said that many positive trends had been evident in world affairs in recent months. The cold war in Europe, which just over a year earlier had seemed permanent, had suddenly become history. His Government expressed the hope that the apartheid system in South Africa would join the cold war and become history very soon.

41. The current optimism would not last unless the international community witnessed an irreversible dismantling of apartheid and the realization of true democracy in South Africa in the near future. That meant the release of all political prisoners and an end to political trials and executions. Until apartheid ceased to exist, comprehensive sanctions against South Africa must continue.

42. With regard to the Non-Self-Governing Territories, he said that his Government welcomed the accession of Namibia to independence. It also hoped that the peoples of New Caledonia and Western Sahara would soon be able to exercise their right to self-determination. In the mean time, the economic and social problems of those Territories must be tackled.

43. He emphasized the importance of developing human resources. Although it was a developing country with limited resources, Thailand had offered many fellowships to the inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories.

44. In conclusion, he stressed the remarkable role played by the United Nations and its Member States in the decolonization process.

45. Mr. BYKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the world was entering a new and post-confrontational phase. Partnership was taking the place of rivalry, and the affirmation of the primacy of law and values common to all mankind was opening up unprecedented prospects for the universal unfolding of the Organization's potential as the world centre of concerted action by States in various aspects of global policy.

46. The memorandum of the Soviet Union entitled "The United Nations in the post-confrontation world" (A/45/626) stressed the importance of focusing the efforts of the General Assembly on the task of a radical shift towards practical issues, and towards enhancing the Assembly's contribution to a radical restructuring of international relations. Such efforts must be made in all aspects of the Organization's activities, including decolonization.

47. The adoption 30 years previously of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples had made an enormous contribution to the liberation of colonial peoples. Among the most noteworthy events of the past year had been the accession, with the direct assistance of the United Nations, of the people of Namibia to independence and the entry of that country into the United Nations family. The problem of Western Sahara would soon be resolved, and the Organization would have once again played a dominant role in that settlement.

48. The declaration of the period 1990-2000 as the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism was in keeping with the positive changes taking place in the world. It was evident that, in order to achieve the aims of the Decade, there must be further harmonization of States' approaches and action, that the stereotypes of the past must be discarded, and that there must be a transition in that sphere of the Organization's activities to mutually acceptable and practical decisions in the interests of the peoples concerned. The corner-stone of that process was recognition of the right of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to freedom of choice, to a pluralistic approach to social and economic progress, and to universal enjoyment of human rights.

49. The Soviet Union unswervingly upheld the right of the peoples of all dependent Territories to self-determination and independence and to freedom of choice. All such peoples had an inalienable right to decide their fate for themselves, and to choose their own path to development. It was important to establish the necessary conditions for the genuinely free exercise of that right. For its part, the Soviet Union reaffirmed its readiness to respect the political choice of the peoples of those Territories, based on the free expression of their will. In the case of the Trust Territory, the agreement of the Security Council was required before the system of trusteeship could be ended in any parts of Micronesia.

50. The question of improving the work of the United Nations and its bodies dealing with decolonization questions deserved serious attention. It was important in that connection to institute and strengthen businesslike co-operation by all States and, above all, a patient search by the administering Powers for generally acceptable and practical solutions to specific questions on the basis of the principles of freedom of choice, a balance of interests and recognition of the priority of universal human values.

51. Mr. MURDOCH (Antigua and Barbuda) said that since the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly some progress had been made towards the resolution of the Western Sahara problem. That progress had reached a point where there were not only agreed proposals for the settlement of the problem but a detailed plan and a specific time-frame for its implementation. The positive statements made by the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the question of Western Sahara also gave reason to hope that the issue was at last approaching a solution satisfactory to all the parties concerned.

52. His delegation also welcomed the approval by the Security Council in June of the Secretary-General's plan to supervise the cease-fire between the Polisario and Morocco. That and the other measures leading up to the proposed referendum would lay the foundation for the free expression of the will of the people of Western Sahara on their future. His delegation was also gratified that the referendum would be organized and conducted in co-operation with the Organization of African Unity, the role of which in the evolution of the situation in Western Sahara should be enhanced.

53. He urged all the parties to intensify their efforts to resolve the remaining problems and thus create the necessary conditions for determining the will of the long-suffering people of Western Sahara.

54. Turning to the question of the Saharawi refugees, he noted that international assistance was essential for those people. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme, numerous voluntary agencies and donors such as Sweden, the European Community, Canada and Switzerland had played an important role in easing the plight of those refugees.

55. Referring to the expanded role of the United Nations in the conduct of free elections in countries around the world where electoral democracy might be under threat, he noted that should that role come to be institutionalized, the part played by the United Nations in conducting referenda and in the process of nation-building both in Namibia and in Western Sahara would be seen as the precursor to an expanded function for the Organization in electoral democracy.

56. Mr. IPSARIDES (Cyprus) said that the efforts to ensure independence for the Non-Self-Governing Territories in accordance with the choice and will of their peoples were of particular interest to his delegation.

57. The current session of the General Assembly coincided with the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on decolonization. Since that time the United Nations had gone a long way towards accomplishing one of its main objectives - that of promoting equality and universal freedom. Since that time, over 50 countries had gained independence and joined the world forum. The presence of an independent and sovereign Namibia in the United Nations was a result of the Organization's dynamic effort in the area of decolonization.

58. In the current international situation, characterized by the broadening of co-operation and a trend towards peaceful resolution of disputes and conflicts, the

(Mr. Ipsarides, Cyprus)

United Nations had become an effective instrument for the construction of a more just and stable world, and there was renewed confidence in it on the part of the international community. It was in that connection that the role of the Committee of 24 as a main organ of the United Nations became essential. His delegation could not entirely subscribe to the assessment that its work was at present full of anachronisms and did not take into consideration the new spirit and political environment in the world.

59. His delegation hoped that the administering Powers would fully co-operate with the Secretary-General and the relevant United Nations committees in providing the information required under Article 73 e of the Charter. It acknowledged their co-operation thus far and urged them to continue to fulfil their legal and moral obligations in that regard.

60. Turning to the question of Western Sahara, he said that the process of finding a settlement under the auspices of the Secretary-General and the President of the Organization of African Unity and with the co-operation of Morocco and the Polisario Front had reached a decisive stage. His Government had already welcomed the positive developments which had taken place with regard to the Western Sahara problem, but considered that the difficulties which might lie ahead should not be underestimated. It was of cardinal importance that all parties should recognize that the ultimate objective in Western Sahara was the holding of a referendum for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara without any military or administrative constraints, organized and conducted by the United Nations in co-operation with the Organization of African Unity. Only in that way would the people of the Territory be able to exercise their right to self-determination.

61. An important contribution to the attainment of that objective and the strengthening of peace and security in the region could be made by adopting a consensus resolution encompassing all the elements for a just and permanent solution of the question of Western Sahara.

62. Mr. DEO (India) said that in the 30 years since the adoption of the historic Declaration on decolonization the world had changed remarkably and the real possibility of putting an end to the nightmare of colonialism was now in sight. However, in spite of those striking achievements, which included the attainment of independence by Namibia, there still remained 18 Non-Self-Governing Territories in the world which served as a reminder that the task was not yet done.

63. At the same time, his delegation was heartened by developments in the largest of those remaining Territories, Western Sahara. The past year's consensus in the General Assembly and the subsequent evolution of events towards the implementation of the OAU-United Nations settlement plan were harbingers of an early referendum in the Territory and the effective realization of the genuine political will of its people.

64. With regard to the Malvinas, his delegation noted that a dialogue was already in progress between the concerned parties and had full confidence in their ability

(Mr. Deo, India)

to find a mutually acceptable solution. India likewise hoped that every effort would be made in New Caledonia by all concerned to ensure the peaceful implementation of a process of self-determination in accordance with the agreements reached and within the agreed time-frame. It had always been India's position that the principles of the Declaration applied equally to all the remaining Territories regardless of size, geographical location, size of population or limited natural resources. The fragility of the economies of those Territories and the vulnerability of their natural resources demanded particular care on the part of the administering Powers in the defence of their interests.

65. The end of the cold war and the dramatic easing of world tensions offered an unparalleled opportunity to attain the noble aim of eradicating colonialism. In order to do that it was necessary to put aside everything unessential and examine the remaining problems with greater energy, innovativeness and concentration. For that purpose the administering Powers should put aside hackneyed phraseology and demonstrate the necessary political will, coming forward with bold initiatives to solve the issues of self-determination for the colonial peoples. The United Nations must play a decisive role in the endeavour to grant the free expression of political will to those peoples to whom history had denied it.

66. Ms. AL-MULLA (Kuwait) said that the decolonization process had been a collective one in which the unity and determination of the international community had ensured the triumph of the forces of justice and freedom evident in the attainment of independence by 80 colonial and other Territories. That unity and determination must be maintained.

67. No country could be denied the right to freedom, integrity and a life in dignity on the basis of its size, geographical location, wealth or any other factor. There should be no obstacles to the attainment of understanding among the representatives of East, West, North and South. All the people of the planet had a right to a free and dignified life. Any attempt to violate those rights would meet with a fitting response, the force of which would demonstrate the unity and determination of the international community.

68. It had been emphasized that the process of decolonization was a collective process and collective efforts were also necessary for the preservation of freedom. The unity and determination of the international community were necessary to guarantee the triumph of the principle that "good prevails over evil" and to break the chains not only of the past but of the present and the future.

AGENDA ITEM 119: PROGRAMME PLANNING (A/C.4/45/L.4)

69. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to document A/C.4/45/L.4, which contained a letter from the President of the General Assembly concerning the question of programme planning.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

FOURTH COMMITTEE
12th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 24 October 1990
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 12th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ADOUKI (Congo)

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AGENDA ITEM 113: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 114: UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 115: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (continued)

General debate

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (continued) (A/45/23 (Parts V and VI); A/45/644 and Corr.1; A/C.4/45/L.2, L.3, L.7; A/AC.109/1015 and Corr.1, A/AC.109/1016 and Corr.1, A/AC.109/1017-1021, A/AC.109/1023 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/AC.109/1024-1036, A/AC.109/1038, A/AC.109/1041 and Corr.1, A/AC.109/1044, A/AC.109/1048 and Corr.1/Rev.1)

AGENDA ITEM 111: INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES TRANSMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 73 e OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/45/23 (Parts V and VI) and A/45/559)

AGENDA ITEM 113: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/45/3 (Chaps. I and VI (Sect. D)), A/45/23 (Part V) and A/45/309; A/AC.109/L.1740; E/1990/72)

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued) (A/45/3 (Chaps. I and VI (Sect. D))

AGENDA ITEM 114: UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA (continued) (A/45/553, A/C.4/45/L.5)

AGENDA ITEM 115: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (continued) (A/45/560, A/C.4/45/L.6)

General debate

1. Mr. KAPAMBWE (Zambia) said that the Committee, at the initial stage of its work, had heard various petitioners from Non-Self-Governing Territories who had expressed a determination to pursue the struggle against colonial oppression. Their courage deserved the Committee's unequivocal support precisely because its support was a source of inspiration to all peoples under such oppression.

2. Zambia, which had itself been a colony, understood very well what colonialism meant. Like any system based on injustice, colonialism could not survive for ever, and no amount of prevarication or paternalism by the colonial Powers towards Non-Self-Governing Territories could prevent its eventual eradication.

3. Development in the world in the past year had created conditions that must be exploited to eliminate colonialism everywhere. Namibia had recently been admitted into the United Nations as an independent nation. His delegation noted with satisfaction that the lessons of Namibia were being taken into account in settling the problem of the last Non-Self-Governing Territory in Africa, Western Sahara.

(Mr. Kapambwe, Zambia)

4. In that connection, his country fully supported the Secretary-General's report on the situation in Western Sahara, approved by the Security Council in June 1990. It was encouraged by the adoption in principle by Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO of the proposals contained in the report, and urged the two parties to continue to co-operate with the Secretary-General. Zambia also welcomed the readiness of Algeria and Mauritania to co-operate with the Special Representative in implementing the joint proposals of the Secretary-General and the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

5. As one of the sponsors of the draft resolution on Western Sahara, Zambia commended it for unanimous adoption. It commended for consensus adoption the draft resolution on New Caledonia contained in the report of the Special Committee.

6. In connection with the report of the Special Committee, his delegation noted that the administering Powers still had much to do in various Non-Self-Governing Territories. It hoped that the administering Powers that had suspended their participation in the Special Committee would reconsider and return to that important body.

7. Turning lastly to the question of apartheid in South Africa, he urged the international community to focus attention on the fact that apartheid was still the official policy of the Government of South Africa. Until discriminatory legislation was repealed, all political prisoners released and genuine elections held on the principle of "one man, one vote", the international community should continue to isolate South Africa through sanctions. Otherwise the inalienable rights embodied in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) would remain for the oppressed people of South Africa a mirage in the desert of apartheid.

8. Mr. IBRAHIM (Egypt) said that in the current year the meetings of the Fourth Committee were extremely significant because they coincided with the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. In recent years, many Territories had achieved independence and joined the family of nations. One of the significant landmarks on that road was the achievement of independence by Namibia. Still, the task of the Fourth Committee was still not fulfilled. In order for colonialism to be eliminated by the end of the current century, the Committee must not relent in its efforts. In order to ensure the right of self-determination, it was essential to be guided by the noble purposes and principles that constituted the very foundation of the work of the United Nations, and to act in accordance with its Charter, with respect for human rights without distinction as to colour, religion or geographic location. The international community, taking into account the special characteristics of Territories still deprived of the right of self-determination, must study and eliminate the negative consequences of activities carried out in such Territories.

9. In an increasingly interdependent world, the developing countries were seeking access to various parts of the planet and trying to attract foreign investments and

(Mr. Ibrahim, Egypt)

co-operate with all countries. His delegation could not agree with the traditional accusations against the administering Powers. Egypt felt that some of their measures were in the right direction. What was now required was to make sure that by the end of the decade, the Non-Self-Governing Territories and peoples could realize their right to political, economic and social self-determination, protect their cultural heritage and economic structure and participate fully in international affairs for the common good.

10. No country should become the victim of aggression just because it was smaller or weaker than others or had suffered under the colonial yoke in specific circumstances that no longer existed.

11. Egypt had always taken an active part in initiatives concerning Western Sahara. In 1989, when the President of Egypt had been Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, extensive contacts had taken place between the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the secretariat of OAU and the parties concerned.

12. His delegation had read the Secretary-General's report on that matter, and agreed with its conclusions concerning the progress towards a peaceful settlement of the question of Western Sahara. Egypt hoped that the parties concerned would reach a mutually acceptable agreement on the outstanding issues within a reasonable time, so that the Secretary-General could present his report to the Security Council with the outline of a specific plan for conducting a referendum.

13. Mr. de ALMEIDA (Angola) congratulated Namibia on its accession to independence and admission to membership in the United Nations, and said that his country and people were closely monitoring the implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). The resolution reflected the international community's conviction that all peoples had an inalienable right to complete freedom, the exercise of sovereignty and the integrity of their national territory.

14. Referring to the statement made by the Angolan Minister for Foreign Affairs at a plenary meeting of the General Assembly during the current session, he said that the Government of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO must continue their talks. His Government also welcomed Security Council resolution 658 (1990) and commended the efforts made by the Secretary-General and the Organization of African Unity to organize a referendum to determine the future of the Territory, taking into account the aspiration of the Saharan people for self-determination and independence. Noting the changes taking place in the world and the ending of the "cold war", he said that the Government and people of Angola hoped to see a peaceful settlement of the question of Western Sahara and of all the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

15. Mr. SITHOLE (Zimbabwe) said that fundamental changes were taking place in the international arena. The end of the "cold war" had ushered in a new era of hope for countries whose peoples were still under the yoke of colonialism. The year 1990 marked the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), an anniversary which should inspire the international community to redouble its efforts to eradicate colonialism throughout the world.

(Mr. Sithole, Zimbabwe)

16. His delegation welcomed the initiative of the Special Committee in holding seminars in two regions where colonialism was still entrenched, thus enabling the United Nations to be fully apprised of the situation in those areas.

17. Although it welcomed developments in South Africa, his delegation was not convinced that apartheid was either dead or dying. The very foundation on which apartheid was built had scarcely changed. He wondered whether South Africa could be trusted when it continued to finance the Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO) when, since 1980, RENAMO had caused physical destruction estimated at more than $US 60 billion and the deaths of more than one million Angolans and Mozambicuans. He expressed the hope that the international community would not relax its sanctions against South Africa until that country had abolished its inhuman system of institutionalized racism.

18. Turning to the question of Western Sahara, he said that he fully supported the the joint good offices process initiated by the Organization of African Unity and the Secretary-General. His country's position remained unchanged in that it regarded the question of Western Sahara as a problem of decolonization and believed that the Saharan people should be given the right to choose their own destiny. It was now necessary to establish a code of conduct for the holding of a referendum. The referendum should be held without any administrative or military constraints. It was important that Morocco should withdraw from the Territory all its civilian, military and police personnel. His delegation looked forward to a successful resolution of the problem and to the day when Western Sahara would join the community of nations as a full and sovereign member.

19. Mr. VESELOVSKY (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that, in his delegation's view, the observance in 1990 of the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples would undoubtedly be an important landmark in the activities of the United Nations in the field of decolonization. The declaration by the General Assembly of the period 1990-2000 as the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism should, his delegation considered, help to mobilize the efforts of the international community, including those of the international organizations of the United Nations system in that field. His delegation took a positive view of the work of a number of specialized agencies of the United Nations in the implementation of the noble aims of the Declaration on decolonization, and in particular the activities of UNESCO, ILO, FAO, WHO, UNICEF, WIPO, UNIDO, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and a number of other agencies.

20. At the same time, his delegation could not but agree with the criticisms which had been levelled against those specialized agencies which were failing to implement the relevant United Nations decisions in that field. In specific terms, only nine agencies had responded to the Secretary-General's letter of 16 March 1990, which had been addressed to 25 specialized agencies and international organizations. The United Nations was not receiving sufficient

(Mr. Veselovsky, Ukrainian SSR)

information from such institutions and organizations as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which might in fact be in a position to foster the world community's endeavour to promote a more rapid completion of the processes of transition from dependence to sovereignty.

21. His country was in favour of intensifying the activities of all agencies in promoting the transition to nationhood of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, by such means as the preparation of appropriate programmes of assistance in the political, economic, cultural, information and environmental fields.

22. He recalled that the beginning of the year had been noteworthy for an event whose significance it would be difficult to overestimate. The victory of Namibia in its struggle over many years against colonial and racist domination was of both political and historic significance. No small contribution to securing the accession of Namibia to independence had been made by the international organizations of the United Nations system. It was now necessary for the Organization to continue its assistance to the Namibian State in order to consolidate its social and economic position.

23. With reference to the question of the collaboration of certain countries, in particular Israel, with the racist minority régime of South Africa in the nuclear field (A/AC.109/1053), he said that recently, in connection with the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Government of South Africa had stated its intention to review its position in that regard. His delegation welcomed that information and considered that the international organizations associated with the United Nations, and in particular IAEA, should base their relations with South Africa on the practical implementation of that verbal declaration.

24. He noted the progress which had been achieved recently in South Africa. A start had been made on the implementation of measures to establish the necessary climate for talks. The de Klerk Government had demonstrated some measure of willingness to engage in dialogue and had lifted the ban on the activities of political parties and movements. It had released Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, established contacts with representatives of the African National Congress, and lifted the state of emergency. However, the fundamental structures of the policy and practice of apartheid had not yet been dismantled.

25. He recalled that, at its summer session, the Economic and Social Council had adopted resolution 1990/54, entitled "Implementation of the Declaration on International Economic Co-operation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries". The Council's deliberations on that draft resolution, in which his delegation had played an active part, had shown the willingness of all delegations to co-operate actively in that important field and to seek decisions based on compromise. In his delegation's view it would be appropriate if such a spirit of co-operation and business-like compromise were also to prevail in the Fourth Committee.

26. Mr. RICHARDSON (United Kingdom) said that his delegation, fully endorsing the statement made by the representative of Italy on behalf of the Twelve Member States of the European Community, wished to explore two particular points: the question of decolonization and the rationalization of the work of the Fourth Committee.

27. Regardless of the size of a territory and the numbers of people involved, United Kingdom policy was always guided by the wishes of the inhabitants. The aim of his Government was to ensure that in exercising their rights, the people of its 10 remaining dependent territories should decide for themselves what kind of political future they wanted. It was up to them to determine whether they wanted independence or wished instead to opt for some other status. In that connection he remarked that it was wrong to equate self-determination solely with independence, since other options were also available.

28. His Government was faithfully fulfilling its obligation under the Charter of the United Nations to develop self-government in its dependent territories. For example, a constitutional review would take place in the Cayman Islands early the following year. His Government was assisting its Caribbean dependent territories to diversify their economies.

29. Turning to the question of the Committee's work, he expressed the view that the Fourth Committee had become trapped by the rhetoric and structures of the past. Referring in particular to the Committee's prevailing preoccupation with apartheid, he said that it was hard to see the link between apartheid and the day-to-day interests of small island territories thousands of miles away from southern Africa. The abolition of apartheid would be best achieved by concentrating efforts under the relevant agenda items in the appropriate United Nations bodies.

30. Increasing demands upon the resources not only of the United Nations but of national Governments gave added urgency to the consideration of the question of reorganizing the Committee's work. His delegation would welcome any proposals put forward in that connection.

31. Mr. GAKWANDI (Uganda) said that colonialism was rooted in the assumption by the leading countries of the previous century that the prosperity of nations depended on how successfully they could compete for the world's natural and human resources. Now that the era of brutal competition was ending, the theoretical underpinnings of colonialism had become obsolete.

32. His delegation had hoped that in the new atmosphere conducive to co-operation, the Committee's task would be made much easier and solutions to the surviving problems of colonialism would be worked out by consensus. Although, regrettably, some countries had not shifted from previously held positions on the issue, his delegation derived some satisfaction from the fact that the reservations they expressed related largely to the language rather than the substance of resolutions before the Committee.

(Mr. Gakwandi, Uganda)

33. In view of the fact that most of the territories remaining under colonial rule were small in size and were located a long way from the world's most populated regions, his delegation stressed the need for the United Nations to adopt new strategies of disseminating information in order to prevent the spread of distorted ideas about the situation in those territories.

34. Referring to the question of Western Sahara, he said that the most reliable mechanism for ascertaining the wishes of the people of Western Sahara was through a free and democratic referendum. Uganda approved the implementation plan drawn up by the technical mission under the supervision of the Secretary-General and urged all countries to support it. The ending of the conflict in Western Sahara would not only restore the rights of the people of that territory but would also contribute towards peace and stability in the region. Uganda would therefore vote in favour of the resolutions on Western Sahara tabled in the Committee, of which it was a co-sponsor, as well as of any other resolutions in support of the efforts of any colonized people to exercise its right to self-determination.

35. Mr. AWOONOR (Ghana) said that colonialism, which in the language of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples was nothing but the subjection of peoples to alien rule, domination and exploitation, constituted a denial of fundamental human rights. It fundamentally contradicted the Charter of the United Nations and impeded the promotion of world peace and co-operation. Although the economic circumstances of Non-Self-Governing Territories might be better than those of some independent States, colonialism ignored the basic issues of freedom and justice for all peoples and denied peoples the right to self-determination, thus flouting their human dignity. The example of Namibia was a testimony to man's yearning for freedom and dignity.

36. Turning to the question of Western Sahara, he said that the proposals of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Chairman of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at last pointed the way towards an answer acceptable to all parties to the dispute. The transitional period which would begin with the cease-fire and end either with the withdrawal of Moroccan troops or, depending on the outcome of the referendum, with the demobilization of Frente POLISARIO troops, would test the political will of both parties to the dispute as well as of the two neighbouring States, Algeria and Mauritania. Ghana called upon the parties to refrain from any act that might endanger the cease-fire, which was an essential pre-condition for the other elements of the implementation plan. One of the plan's most crucial elements was the removal of administrative and military constraints. There should be no constraints on the exercise by the United Nations of its responsibility for the organization and conduct of the referendum.

37. Ms. BIRD (Australia) said that the United Nations and the Fourth Committee could look back with pride on the achievements of the 30 years since the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Namibia's recent transition to independence was the latest of those achievements, and Australia also hoped that the Secretary-General would soon be able to implement plans for a referendum in Western Sahara.

(Ms. Bird, Australia)

38. The thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration provided an excellent opportunity for assessing the work done and the tasks still outstanding. In 1962, the year of its establishment, the Non-Self-Governing Territories on the list of the Special Committee on Decolonization had numbered 64. Now there remained only 18, mostly small island States in the southern Pacific and the Caribbean. That did not mean, of course, that the Committee's work was any the less necessary. Each of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories presented unique circumstances requiring individual attention. The failure of some of the Committee's decisions and resolutions to take account of changing circumstances gave grounds for concern.

39. As a nation of the South Pacific, Australia attached particular importance to the situation in New Caledonia. It considered that the interests of New Caledonia and regional stability required a peaceful and orderly transition to genuine self-determination leaving all options open and safeguarding the rights of the Kanaks as well as of all other New Caledonians. The signing of the Matignon accords in 1988 had represented an important step forward in that process. In the past two years the situation in New Caledonia had been characterized by dialogue and co-operation, and progress had been made in the economic and political spheres. Her Government hoped that all parties would continue to abide by the principles of co-operation and conciliation.

40. The Committee would soon be considering a draft resolution on New Caledonia which had been adopted unanimously by the Special Committee on Decolonization. Her delegation expressed the hope that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

41. Mr. HERNANDEZ MACHADO (Cuba) said that since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) significant changes had taken place in the field of decolonization and over 50 countries had been freed from the colonial yoke. Nevertheless it remained essential to step up efforts and to support the legitimate aspirations of peoples still living under colonial rule. Despite changing circumstances in the world at large, changes in the situation of the colonial territories were only slight; their economies still depended entirely on the governing Powers and other foreign sources, and the continuing existence of military bases and objects in many of them impeded the Declaration's implementation.

42. It was more than ever incumbent upon the governing Powers to show their goodwill by complying with the provisions of the relevant resolutions in respect of each of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. Some delegations had said that the resolutions submitted by the Special Committee were obsolete and out of touch with reality. His delegation did not share that view. In that connection, it should be noted that the reason for the repetitive nature of many aspects of draft resolutions tabled in the Fourth Committee was the failure of the governing Powers and of international organizations to fulfil their obligations properly. Many examples could be cited in that connection: the United Kingdom had refused since 1986 to co-operate with the Special Committee; there were still difficulties in co-operation between the Trusteeship Council and the Special Committee on the issue of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands; the participation of

(Mr. Hernandez Machado, Cuba)

representatives of the Territories' populations in the work of the Special Committee was not ensured in all cases, and governing Powers refused year after year to receive missions sent to Non-Self-Governing Territories.

43. In that connection, it was disquieting that the Secretary-General's report on the work of the Organization (A/45/1), in setting out the basic directions for the Organization's activities, made no reference to colonialism and the work of decolonization. On the other hand, the Secretary-General would be required to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session a plan of action for the Decade for the eradication of colonialism, which would serve the Special Committee as a guide for its analysis of the problems in that field and in defining specific measures to be taken in order to eliminate colonialism.

44. Until such time as the administering Powers had carried out the provisions of the Declaration the work of decolonization would remain unfinished. Until such time as the apartheid régime was completely eradicated, it was necessary to maintain international pressure on the Pretoria Government and to support the liberation movement of the majority of the South African population and the Front-line States. The occasion offered by the current session should be taken to unite all forces on behalf of the complete eradication of colonialism, racial discrimination and apartheid.

45. Ms. RASOANAIVO (Madagascar) said that the great changes taking place in the world had given a new impetus to the movement of the peoples towards democracy and liberation and demonstrated conclusively that self-determination was not an empty abstraction. United in the desire to determine their own fate freely, the peoples of the world were determined to base the relations between them on the principles of the rejection of confrontation and unhealthy competition. However, it seemed that that process had not yet been extended to the countries of the South. An understandable overall optimism should not serve as an excuse for ignoring the problems connected with the attainment of independence by the colonial countries.

46. The international community had set itself the goal of eradicating colonialism before the end of the millennium. The process by which Namibia had attained independence might serve as a model, and it showed that only a multilateral entity like the United Nations was capable of carrying out so complex a task, involving so many interests. Moreover, complete freedom could only be guaranteed if the fundamental freedom of political decision of the peoples was ensured in the period after the attainment of independence, and that required the construction of the corresponding structures.

47. The political autonomy conquered at the cost of so much effort would be almost meaningless if it were not based on a satisfactory level of socio-economic development. The sad characterization of the 1980s as a time lost for development would have an even bitterer ring if it were applied to the process of decolonization. In that connection, the administering Powers, in co-operation with the development institutions, including those of the United Nations, must make a more sustained effort to promote the economic development of the colonial countries.

(Ms. Rasoanaivo, Madagascar)

48. The future of the Non-Self-Governing Territories also depended in equal measure on the preservation of their environment. To preserve their ecosystems, those regions should not be used as sites for nuclear testing or the storage of nuclear and toxic wastes. Such exploitation of their natural and human resources by the administering and other Powers was impermissible. The security and development of the indigenous populations must take precedence over the strategic interests of the administering Powers and global security itself required all States, both nuclear and non-nuclear, to give up policies of deterrence. All those problems could only be solved by the unity of the international community and the fulfilment of their responsibilities under the Charter by the administering Powers.

49. Her delegation welcomed the progress made in preparing the referendum for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, which testified to the real desire of the parties to find a just solution to that question in the very near future. In that connection the settlement plan set out in Security Council resolution 658 (1990) was of historic significance. However, the implementation of that plan would require resolute action and the acceptance of heavy responsibilities by all the parties concerned.

50. Her delegation fully supported the good offices mission of the Secretary-General and the Chairman of the OAU, and was confident that the Polisario Front and Morocco would fulfil their responsibility to enable the people of Western Sahara freely to express their will.

51. Mrs. TAHIR-KHELI (United States of America): said that the draft resolutions on the small territories all contained the same language reiterated from year to year and in the opinion of her Government were a waste of time and effort. For that reason, her delegation heartily endorsed the proposal by Norway in the Special Committee to consolidate 10 resolutions on small island territories into a single omnibus resolution. If the Committee decided that an omnibus resolution was unacceptable, her delegation would expect the Special Committee to produce alternative proposals for rationalizing its work in the interests of avoiding duplication.

52. The idea of adopting an omnibus resolution was in no way intended to diminish the attention paid by the Special Committee or the Fourth Committee to individual Territories. Material would continue to be collected, developments reviewed, petitioners heard and reports written on each of the individual Territories. The only change would be that the basic principles for the development of the Territories would be laid down in the omnibus resolution but specific issues which were inappropriate for a General Assembly resolution would be eliminated.

53. Her delegation would also urge the Special Committee to consider the language used in several of its resolutions on the presence of military bases. That language implied that those bases constituted a major obstacle to self-determination and played other than a defensive role. Her Government protested vigorously against that anachronistic language, which reflected the inability of the Special Committee to come to grips with contemporary reality. For

(Mrs. Tahir-Kheli, United States)

that reason, her delegation was unable to join the consensus on the resolution and, in calling for a vote on it, wished to express its disagreement with the existing text.

54. Mr. STRUGAR (Yugoslavia) said that Yugoslavia and other non-aligned countries had always attached priority importance to the process of decolonization. The Movement, at whose initiative the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism had been proclaimed, had established a working group which would work for the implementation of the corresponding plan of action.

55. There had been important achievements during the past year in the field of decolonization, including the attainment of independence by Namibia, the entrance into a decisive stage of the process of settlement of the question of Western Sahara, and the encouraging developments with respect to the Malvinas Islands. The fact that the list of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories contained mainly small Territories in the Pacific and the Caribbean in no way diminished the obligation of the United Nations to them. On the contrary, the international community should concentrate on ensuring that the aims of the Declaration were realized.

56. Time had proved that with political will and mutual co-operation by all concerned, colonial problems could be settled peacefully. In order to increase the effectiveness of the Organization's work, an effort should be made to reach consensus on the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly. By doing so, they would be made binding on all and their full implementation ensured.

57. Noting the comments made on the need to improve the work of the Special Committee, he said his delegation considered that the Committee should deal with the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories in a more innovative manner, taking into account the specific nature of each and adjusting its methods of work to the new international atmosphere. As a member of the Committee, Yugoslavia was ready to work actively on promoting co-operation with the administering Powers in order to achieve the results desired.

58. Mr. SILVA (Sri Lanka) said that the attainment of independence by the Non-Self-Governing Territories would be a significant contribution to the goal of equality laid down in the Charter. The work of the United Nations in the field of decolonization had been remarkably successful; regrettably, however, the process had not yet been completed. Now that international relations were being freed from the ideological animosities of former days, there should be no difficulty in opening the way for the peoples of the dependent Territories to express their will freely.

59. His delegation took note with satisfaction of the progress made by the Special Committee in the decolonization process and attached great value to the constructive role played by the missions sent to the Territories in collecting information on conditions in them and determining the wishes and aspirations of their peoples concerning their future.

(Mr. Silva, Sri Lanka)

60. The United Nations and the administering Powers had a responsibility to make the inhabitants of the Non-Self-Governing Territories aware of the options available to them in the exercise of their right to self-determination and to create the conditions in which they could freely indicate their political will. In that connection the co-operation with the Special Committee by the Governments of New Zealand, Portugal and the United States was enhancing its capacity to expedite the decolonization process.

61. His delegation called upon the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations to expand their existing assistance programmes in keeping with the needs of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and to exercise the greatest possible flexibility with regard to the procedures for granting such assistance. The exploitation of the natural resources of the Territories was a major obstacle to their political independence and must therefore be terminated forthwith.

62. In conclusion, the delegation of Sri Lanka welcomed the recent developments with regard to the settlement of the question of Western Sahara and supported Security Council resolution 658 (1990).

63. Mr. CISTERNAS (Chile) said that since the foundation of the United Nations its greatest achievements had been in decolonization. During that period its membership had increased considerably.

64. For no people was anything more important than the exercise of its right to self-determination. Nothing was as important for the inhabitants of a Territory as the opportunity to determine their own form of government in conditions of freedom and democracy. By the beginning of the last decade of the twentieth century the United Nations had succeeded in removing from the agenda many of the questions of decolonization. Only a small number of Non-Self-Governing Territories remained. Neither the size of a Territory, nor its geographical location, nor the number of its inhabitants or scarcity of its natural resources must impede the aspiration of its people to self-determination and independence.

65. The decolonization work of the United Nations was still not complete. In order to carry out its decolonization mission the Organization had established the Special Committee on decolonization. The view had been expressed that the Special Committee's work was an anachronism and ineffective and did not take into account the new circumstances of a contemporary world in which mutual understanding and détente had taken the place of ideology and rivalry. However, as had been repeatedly pointed out, any assertions of anachronism in the Special Committee's work must confront the fact that the world still had Territories under colonial rule, and any talk of ineffectiveness must be viewed in the light of the difficulties which, despite the new climate in the world, still impeded the efforts to ensure that all peoples had the opportunity of freedom and democracy. The work of the Special Committee could not be completed but it must be continued. His delegation stated its readiness to study carefully the Special Committee's working methods in order to try to remove any outdated practices.

(Mr. Cisternas, Chile)

66. However, if the Special Committee was to achieve its ultimate goal, it must be able to count on the co-operation of the administering Powers, which must transmit information about the political, economic and social situation in the Territories under their administration. That obligation of the administering Powers stemmed from the Charter of the United Nations itself. Furthermore, the Special Committee must be given sufficient resources to send missions to Non-Self-Governing Territories with the necessary co-operation by the administering Powers.

67. The growth of mutual understanding in contemporary international relations would have a positive effect on the Special Committee's performance of its decolonization work. The attainment of concrete results in that work required concerted efforts to bring actions and attitudes into line with the new realities and dispel the age-old mistrust.

68. Attention was currently centred on the question of the full and prompt implementation of the Secretary-General's proposals to enable the inhabitants of Western Sahara freely to state their wishes about their future. It should be noted that the proposed referendum, which was to allow the Saharan people to make a choice between definitive unification with Morocco and independence, would represent the first measure of its kind carried through under the auspices and full control of the United Nations.

69. According to the available information, the conditions were basically in place for the referendum to be carried out without hindrance and within a relatively short time-frame. In order for the Secretary-General to be able to complete his report and submit it to the Security Council, it was necessary to clarify a number of important points relating in particular to the strength of the Moroccan forces which were to remain in the Territory during the referendum period and to the status of the police and the settlers in the Territory. Chile had no doubt that the Moroccan Government would resolve those issues in a suitable manner, so that the referendum could be carried out in 1991.

70. Chile believed that the Secretary-General's work on the issue must be supported. Accordingly, it intended to join the sponsors of the draft resolution on the question of Western Sahara (A/C.4/45/L.2). The Chilean delegation considered that the draft resolution should be adopted by consensus.

71. Mr. DIARRA (Mali) recalled that the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 1514 (XV) had been commemorated only a few days earlier. Decolonization was the sphere of activity in which the United Nations had secured its most impressive achievements. However, the decisive factor had been the valiant struggle of the peoples themselves.

72. The adoption of resolution 43/47, in which the General Assembly had proclaimed the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, had reaffirmed the general commitment of States to securing the gradual transition of the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories to self-determination and independence by the end of the century.

(Mr. Diarra, Mali)

73. It was already the established approach that such criteria as size of population or territory and geographical location or level of economic development should be disregarded when evaluating the possibility of a people exercising its right to self-determination and independence. The Charter of the United Nations and several resolutions of the General Assembly directed the administering Powers to fulfil their obligation to prepare the peoples of the Territories to exercise that inalienable right. That obligation also included such requirements as the gradual political transition of the Territories to self-determination, the gradual creation of economic infrastructure to facilitate the transition, and strict observance of the principle of a people's inalienable right to sovereignty over the natural resources of its land. In addition, the administering Powers had to refrain from establishing military bases in the Territories and from using the Territories for military activities directed against other countries. Another important element was the development of the human resources of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. The administering Powers were also required to transmit to the United Nations information about developments in the Territories under their administration. They were, moreover, obliged to make it possible for missions to visit the Territories.

74. The apartheid régime was an anachronism which must be eradicated. Althougn his delegation noted the positive recent developments in South Africa, it still insisted on the maintenance of the sanctions against the apartheid régime until its cornerstones had been dismantled.

75. With regard to the question of Western Sahara, the Mali delegation welcomed the progress in the peace process begun in 1986 in accordance with resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX) of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and General Assembly resolution 40/50.

76. The meetings in Geneva in June 1990 and the various technical missions had made it possible to begin the implementation of the peace plan. With the establishment of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) an important step had been taken towards the holding of a referendum on the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara without military or administrative constraints and under the control of the United Nations working in conjunction with the Organization of African Unity. His delegation fully supported the joint efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the current Chairman of OAU, and it called upon the parties directly involved to endeavour to achieve a just and definitive settlement of what was a fratricidal conflict.

77. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that Bolivia, Ghana, Mauritania and Chile had become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/45/L.6 concerning agenda item 115. He also reported that Egypt, Lesotho, Mauritania, Mali and Peru had become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/45/L.5 concerning agenda item 114.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

FOURTH COMMITTEE
13th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 24 October 1990
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 13th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ADOUKI (Congo)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (continued) (A/45/23 (Part VI), chap. IX; A/AC.109/1015-1021, 1023 and Add.1, 1024-1036, 1038, 1041, 1044, 1048 and Rev.1; A/C.4/45/L.2 and L.3)

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General debate

1. Mrs. SAMATE (Burkina Faso), noting that 1990 marked the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, welcomed the progress made in decolonization but observed that further efforts would be needed as long as colonialism persisted. Colonial exploitation was a violation of fundamental human rights and seriously undermined the principles governing the development of peaceful relations among nations, thereby posing a serious threat to international peace and security.

2. Significant progress had been made on one question of decolonization, namely Western Sahara: the principle of a referendum for self-determination was now accepted by the parties and the Security Council had adopted resolution 658 (1990) unanimously. She hoped that the remaining problems, namely, questions relating to the code of conduct and the suspension of military activities for the referendum campaign and the launching of a direct dialogue indispensable to the peace process, would be ironed out. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 44/87 and despite its critical economic situation, Burkina Faso was providing four higher education scholarships for Saharans.

3. United Nations agencies must increase their assistance to colonial Territories and their liberation movements. Administering Powers, for their part, must agree to and prepare the way for self-determination by the populations under their trusteeship.

4. Mrs. RIBADANEIRA (Ecuador) reiterated her country's support for the Republic of Namibia, whose admission to the United Nations was overwhelming evidence of the Organization's ability to use its mechanisms effectively to achieve the objectives set forth in the Charter.

5. Ecuador adhered resolutely to the principle of self-determination. In the case of Western Sahara, therefore, it welcomed the outcome of the mission of good offices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the current Chairman of OAU, which had resulted in proposals for a settlement and an implementation plan approved unanimously by the Security Council. The parties concerned must now show a spirit of co-operation and the necessary political will to overcome the remaining obstacles.

6. The decolonization of the 18 remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories would be no easy task, given the diversity of conditions there. The United Nations remained the most appropriate body for performing that task. Administering Powers had a duty to inform the populations of those Territories, however small, of the various options open to them, and to prepare them for self-government while helping them develop their economies. Those Powers should co-operate fully with the Special Committee on decolonization and transmit the information called for in Article 73 e of the Charter. United Nations visiting missions were also very important.

7. Her delegation agreed that the working methods of the Fourth Committee should be urgently reviewed in order to bring them more closely into line with the new situation prevailing in the world.

8. Mr. THOMSON (Fiji), speaking on the question of New Caledonia, associated himself fully with the statement made on 22 October by the Permanent Representative of Vanuatu on behalf of the countries members of the South Pacific Forum who were represented at the United Nations. His delegation was happy to note the continuing participation of the FLNKS, the recognized body of the Kanak people, in the work of the Fourth Committee and other decolonization bodies.

9. His delegation noted with satisfaction that since the signing of the Matignon and Oudinot accords in 1988, the climate of confrontation which had prompted the General Assembly to put New Caledonia back on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories at its forty-first session had been replaced by a spirit of co-operation and accommodation. The leaders of the South Pacific Forum had consequently endorsed the process under way in New Caledonia at their meetings in July 1989 and July 1990. The Fourth Committee and the Special Committee on decolonization must make sure that the administering Power transmitted the information called for in Article 73 e of the Charter. The members of the South Pacific Forum had requested that such information be supplemented by visiting missions.

10. The draft resolution on New Caledonia contained in document A/45/23 (Part VI), which the Special Committee on decolonization had adopted by consensus, was aimed at consolidating the process of reconciliation and confidence-building between the parties concerned. It had the full support of the seven South Pacific Forum countries who were members of the United Nations.

11. Mr. RAHMAN (Pakistan) said he hoped that the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 43/47, proclaiming the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, would ensure the demise of colonialism before the turn of the century. Pakistan, which had suffered long years under colonialism and knew the value of freedom, was delighted at the independence of Namibia, and was happy to see it occupy its rightful place in the comity of nations.

12. The Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples not only gave voice to the aspirations of the colonized peoples for self-determination but it also required the administering Powers to recognize the principle that the interests of the inhabitants of territories under their administration were paramount, and that peoples under alien rule had the right to independence in all spheres. It was incumbent on Members of the United Nations to keep a close watch over conditions obtaining in the Non-Self-Governing Territories. In that regard, he wished to emphasize the importance of the work of the Special Committee, of the information provided by petitioners and of United Nations visiting missions.

13. In general, the economic infrastructure and human resource development in Non-Self-Governing Territories were weak. More often than not, their fragile economies were linked to the interests of the administering Power. Those conditions often proved to be an impediment in their movement towards independence. The best possible use must therefore be made of available local resources. Since the shortage of trained managerial manpower was an obstacle to self-government, training of cadres was a basic priority. Pakistan was accordingly offering scholarships for study in various fields to students from Non-Self-Governing Territories, thereby making a modest contribution to the process of decolonization.

14. The organizations of the United Nations system were playing a crucial role in liquidating colonialism through the assistance they provided, and those efforts should be well co-ordinated.

15. Pakistan deplored the fact that colonialism in its worst form continued to be practised in South Africa, where the abhorrent system of apartheid denied the right of self-determination to the black majority and also denied the black population its basic human dignity. It was clear that the system of apartheid could not be reformed. It had to be completely eliminated in all its forms, and to that end continuing pressure must be brought to bear on the Pretoria régime and the sanctions maintained until there was evidence of profound and irreversible changes. It was therefore of the utmost importance that United Nations agencies should follow the guidelines set forth in the programme of action contained in the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, adopted at the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly.

16. As long as even a single Territory remained under the colonial yoke, the principles enshrined in the Charter would not be respected and the work of the Fourth Committee would not be complete.

17. Mr. BLANC (France) said that France maintained its reservations concerning consideration by the United Nations of the question of New Caledonia, over which France had sole sovereignty. His delegation was, however, prepared to give Member States full information on conditions in that Territory.

18. Outlining those conditions, he said that the dialogue between the leaders of the two main political parties had resulted in the 1988 agreements, which had been overwhelmingly endorsed by the people of France. According to those agreements, the Caledonians would pronounce on their future in a vote on self-determination in 1998, in which only voters continuously domiciled in New Caledonia for at least 10 years could take part. In the mean time the Territory would largely be administered by its own elected representatives and would benefit from a policy of economic expansion and social justice. In each of the three provinces, an assembly elected by universal suffrage was exercising its full powers with the assistance of several thousand officials assigned to it by the Administration. The French Government shared the view of the provinces that the training of Melanesians was a major priority and had allocated substantial budgetary resources in that area, to help to train 400 higher-level personnel, mostly Melanesians, over a 10-year period. The effects of economic realignment could already be seen, particularly in such areas as agriculture, employment, infrastructure and mining, a sector in which the Melanesians were preparing to assume higher-level responsibilities. Lastly, the French Government considered that cultural development was also an important goal, and was endeavouring to promote Kanak culture.

19. The implementation of the 1988 agreements, which the parties monitored on a regular basis, was a long-term task which enjoyed the support of practically all the countries of the region. The French Government was encouraging that regional co-operation, to which it attached great importance.

20. Once again at the current session, the French delegation would not be calling for a vote on the proposed draft resolution (A/45/23, chap. IX, I), which took account of the positive developments in the situation in the Territory. However, it could not associate itself with the adoption of that text, as it dealt with a question that, under Article 73 of the Charter, which had not been affected by General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV), 1541 (XV) and 41/41 A, came within the competence of France and under its exclusive sovereignty.

21. In conclusion, he paid a tribute to the leaders of the two political movements in the Territory, whose willingness to achieve a reconciliation had enabled the New Caledonians to live under conditions of peace and stability and devote themselves, with the firm support of the French Government, to the development of their community, until they had an opportunity, in a few years' time, to exercise their right to self-determination in complete freedom, without any outside interference.

22. Mr. AL-MAHMOUD (Qatar) said that the attainment of independence by colonial peoples and Trust Territories was the most important phenomenon of the past 45 years. As the twentieth century drew to a close, only a few small and sparsely populated territories were still dependent. But their demographic or geographical limitations could not prevent their accession to independence. The credit was due to the United Nations, which applied the same principles to all territories

(Mr. Al-Mahmoud, Qatar)

regardless of size. Small countries, like Qatar, whose security and territorial integrity depended on respect for the principles enshrined in the Charter, greatly appreciated the work done by the Organization in that area.

23. Qatar welcomed Namibia's independence, which had come as the crowning point of the efforts made by the United Nations Council for Namibia over many years. It appreciated the personal missions and initiatives undertaken by the Secretary-General with a view to settling regional differences, and particularly the question of Western Sahara, by peaceful means in accordance with the Charter. It was to be hoped that the Fourth Committee would adopt a draft resolution that would contribute to the settlement of that question, now that there was a consensus on holding a referendum. The situation in New Caledonia still gave cause for considerable concern, since the right to self-determination and the other principles enunciated in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples were not being applied in that Territory. In spite of the major changes that had occurred in southern Africa, apartheid had not yet been abolished, and further efforts must be made to ensure that all citizens of South Africa could live under conditions of equality.

24. Mr. MDEE (United Republic of Tanzania) recalled that for a number of years Tanzania had co-sponsored the draft resolutions on Western Sahara, being convinced that colonialism had to be eradicated everywhere in the world. Although Tanzania was not found wanting when the situation called for a form of struggle over and above peaceful negotiations, its preference was for such negotiations. Tanzania had therefore been delighted when Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO had agreed to pursue a negotiated settlement of the question of self-determination for Western Sahara. His country had encouraged that process, and it was also pleased that a set of proposals and a timetable for their implementation had been agreed upon. It particularly welcomed the plan for a referendum, to be organized under the auspices of the United Nations in co-operation with the Organization of African Unity. However, there remained the problem of the number of troops that Morocco should be allowed to keep in the territory at the time of the referendum. Such a military presence could exert an intimidating influence on the general population and thus have a negative effect on the referendum. With its recent experience in Namibia, the United Nations was conversant with such matters as appropriate troop levels, and Morocco should continue to show its good faith by co-operating with the Secretary-General in that regard. After the sacrifices made by the Saharan people, the basic ingredients of a negotiated settlement were in place, and if the process were to derail, it would be a tragedy not only for the people of Western Sahara or Africa, but for the entire international community as well. Morocco must therefore work closely with the OAU and the United Nations to overcome the last obstacle to a fair settlement, in the interests of all.

25. Mr. ZEINELDDIN (Islamic Republic of Iran) stressed the importance of information on the Non-Self-Governing Territories, which was essential for a full review of the situation. Despite the changes in the political situation in the world, the issue of decolonization could not be relegated to second place. The decolonization process had not yet been completed, and bodies such as the Special Committee on decolonization and its sub-committees, which had played an essential

(Mr. Zeinelddin, Islamic Republic of Iran)

role in the work of the Fourth Committee, needed the co-operation of the administering Powers, which had an absolute obligation to provide information on the conditions in the Territories which they administered. The committees could not be content merely with following developments in the general international situation, for they would be acting against the interests of those Territories by ignoring the realities.

26. The United Nations, in line with the changes in the international climate, must pursue constructive discussions on ways of eliminating colonialism, strengthening the Special Committee on decolonization as much as possible. As a result of the efforts of all concerned, progress had been made towards a peaceful settlement of the question of Western Sahara. There was a need for more constructive co-operation with the Fourth Committee, pending completion of the process of decolonization, which would be possible only in an atmosphere of understanding and co-operation.

27. Ms. FOUNTAIN (Canada) said that during the 45 years of its existence, the United Nations had pursued with great success the ideals of its Charter, and particularly the realization of the principle of equal rights and self-determination for all peoples. The United Nations had thus played a crucial role in the independence of Namibia. Canada was proud of having been a part of that process and would continue to assist Namibia in its economic and social development.

28. At the present time, the United Nations, held in such high esteem by the nations of the world, represented hope. It therefore had a responsibility to turn its attention to the future with vision, foresight and imagination. For example, the time had come for the Fourth Committee to examine its agenda and procedures. Several items still discussed by the Committee were no longer relevant, or were the responsibility of other bodies. For instance, with the independence of Namibia, the struggle against apartheid no longer had a place in the decolonization agenda. Canada would not wish anyone to mistake its resolve to bring about the end of apartheid, a repugnant and wholly unacceptable system, but it took the view that there were more appropriate forums within the United Nations for dealing with the issue. Canada hoped that by the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly, the Fourth Committee would have rationalized its agenda, focusing its efforts on the important questions that remained legitimately within its mandate.

29. Canada had also hoped that, in the draft resolutions submitted, account would have been taken of the developments that had occurred in South Africa and of the consensus texts adopted at the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly, but that was not the case. The Committee was not acting in the best interests of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories by adopting resolutions containing provisions that were outdated, unrealistic and, in certain cases, inconsistent with work being carried out elsewhere in the Organization. It must not play into the hands of those who, as the number of Territories dwindled, sought to trivialize the work of the Committee.

30. Mr. JOHANSEN (Norway), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that they attached the utmost importance to the right of all peoples in Non-Self-Governing Territories to self-determination. It was the duty of the United Nations to safeguard that right. The United Nations, through the Special Committee on decolonization and the Fourth Committee, had played an important role in decolonization, which constituted one of the greatest successes in the 45 years of its existence.

31. However, in the light of the change in the international political climate, the growing consensus on many issues in the United Nations could be better reflected in the Fourth Committee than was presently the case. The time had also come to take a good look at the nature of the Committee's work and the way in which it dealt with the decolonization issue. Issues extraneous to decolonization should be kept outside the work of the Committee. That was true, for example, of the question of apartheid which, since Namibia's independence, was now the responsibility of other bodies. There was also a need to rationalize the work of the Fourth Committee, and of the Special Committee on decolonization and its sub-committees, in order to avoid the overlapping that occurred at present. Drafts submitted should focus on their main issue, and should also be shorter. The Nordic countries saw merit in the proposal that many of the traditional consensus texts should be presented in one omnibus resolution. Such rationalization of the work should not in any way diminish the importance of specific needs of certain Territories, which could be reflected in an annex to the omnibus resolution. However, the Nordic countries objected to the tendency to submit draft resolutions which, for the most part, were hardly negotiable. That trend would ultimately not serve the interests of the Territories still remaining on the Committee's agenda.

32. Mr. FUENTES-IBAÑEZ (Bolivia) drew attention to the scale of the changes which had taken place since the Charter of the United Nations had established the right to self-determination in 1945. If colonialism had now become an outdated phenomenon, that was largely due to General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), the corner-stone of a process which had enabled many peoples to take their place in the comity of nations. For example Namibia, whose struggle for liberation had been encouraged by Bolivia, was now a sovereign State, while in Western Sahara there were clear prospects for a settlement based on self-determination.

33. Bolivia was following with keen interest the liberation movement in which the peoples still governed by administering Powers were involved. It therefore felt that the idea - inspired by budgetary considerations - of a "catch-all" resolution dealing indiscriminately with all the Territories that were still dependent, should be rejected. The Committee had thus far considered the Territories on an individual basis, so that each case could be studied in detail. It could certainly do for the remaining Territories what it had done for former Territories, even though they did not take up so much space on the map of the world. In fact, they needed all the more assistance precisely because they were smaller and had no political resources. It would not be in keeping with the spirit of resolution 1514 (XV) to lump them all together and give them second-class treatment.

34. Of the territories still under foreign rule, special attention should be given to the archipelagos in the South Pacific, which were exposed to the effects of nuclear tests conducted by foreign Powers.

35. Mrs. KING-ROUSSEAU (Trinidad and Tobago) said that with the momentous occasion of Namibia's accession to independence, the decolonization process was entering on a complex new phase. What was appropriate for a vast territory like Namibia was not necessarily suitable for the small territories. However, in making the necessary adjustments, it would be wrong to depart from certain fundamental principles.

36. Some who were largely motivated by ideological considerations, were still somewhat hesitant when it came to discussing the small territories. Now that the cold war had ended there was, however, reason to hope that "ideological obsessions" were a thing of the past, and that from now on priority could be given to the well-being and the self-determination of peoples that were still dependent. In that area, the emphasis should be placed on co-ordination, which was essential, and account must be taken of the specific needs of each Territory, particularly where there was a danger of natural disasters. To show that the Territories were indeed fully-fledged partners in dialogue, technical and advisory services should be placed at their disposal. Thus, for example, in the crucial matter of the environment, which affected the very existence of the islands, UNCTAD could contribute to the study of specific problems. The recent example of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) could be followed, and Territories could become involved in regional activities.

37. The fact that the decolonization process had to undergo a change did not mean that States should indulge in complacency and, regardless of proclaimed principles, lose interest in Territories that were considered geographically unimportant. All Territories had an intrinsic importance. Therefore, Trinidad and Tobago had serious reservations about lumping them all together in a "catch-all" resolution, and her country would ensure that the small territories were not marginalized. It had been said that, the 1980s had been the "lost decade" from the point of view of development; the coming years should not become the "decade of lost opportunities".

38. Mr. SARDENBERG (Brazil) recalled that his country had, from the very beginning, pledged itself to the principle of self-determination established by the Charter of the United Nations, which had dealt the death-blow to colonialism. The United Nations was being transformed into a real instrument of the great revolution of the times - the economic and political liberation of the colonial peoples - and that had been made possible by its efforts to promote conciliation. In that connection, a tribute should be paid to the work that had been done over many years by the Committee on decolonization. The cause of self-determination had everything to gain from the new climate of co-operation and negotiation, and it could only be be hoped that the administering Powers would take account of developments in international relations. He noted with satisfaction that Namibia had joined the ranks of sovereign nations, and also welcomed the prospects of settling the question of Western Sahara and the dialogue in the case of East Timor. However, in the general détente that had been achieved, the Territories that were still not self-governing should not be relegated to second place. On the contrary, it was important to broaden the political and economic base of those Territories.

39. Mr. OTHMAN (Malaysia) noted that considerable progress had been made since the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and that the United Nations, on increasing its membership from 100 in 1960 to 159 in 1990, had become more representative. However, the Organization should not relax its efforts to ensure that by the end of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, which was beginning in 1990, all colonized peoples had finally achieved their independence and freely decided on their own political, economic, social and cultural development. It was absolutely essential that that process should be accelerated, as it was still too slow. The Committee on decolonization therefore needed the co-operation of all members of the United Nations and its specialized agencies. Furthermore, the people of the Non-Self-Governing Territories would have to be educated politically, and the organization of some regional seminars for that purpose was a positive development. International public opinion also needed to be sensitized.

40. An administering Power was obliged to protect the natural resources of the Territory under its control and to diversify and develop its economy. Territories with limited economic bases could very well become viable through integration or co-operation with others. The flow of immigrants and settlers into the sparsely populated Territories was disturbing, because such flows could modify the demographic composition of the Territories so that the indigenous population became a minority. The practice of allowing residents from the administering country to vote after staying only three months in the Territory should not be tolerated.

41. In Western Sahara there had been very positive developments. The United Nations could conceivably formulate a plan that would be acceptable to all the parties to the conflict and enable a free and fair referendum to be held. His delegation was willing to co-operate in that peace process.

42. Administering Powers which were also founding Members of the United Nations should be reminded that the Charter of the United Nations required them to co-operate fully with the Organization, that the interests of the Territories were paramount and that world peace partly depended on the eradication of colonialism.

43. Mr. YOUSIF (Sudan) said that his country had been one of the first States in the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and in the Organization of African Unity to sponsor draft resolutions on the exercise of the right to self-determination, and it was optimistic about the prospects of the final eradication of all traditional forms of colonialism. However, new forms of foreign domination were emerging, and the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian and other Arab territories was a clear example of that trend. In view of the gap between rich and poor, and between weak and powerful, a broader interpretation should be given to the term "colonization" to cover such forms of undue influence and abuse of power as zionism, racial discrimination, and foreign intervention. A greater effort must be made to introduce a new world order, in which there was a proper balance of power and wealth, and in which the peoples were emancipated from all forms of economic, cultural or other hegemony and no longer enslaved in the interests of others. Sudan, which had itself been a colony for some 50 years, knew from experience that the administering Powers in particular could not be reminded too often of the rights of the peoples under their administration.

44. The CHAIRMAN announced that Brazil, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Venezuela were joining the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/45/L.2, entitled "Question of Western Sahara" and submitted under agenda item 18, that Colombia was becoming a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.4/45/L.5, entitled "United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa" and submitted under agenda item 114, and that Argentina and Colombia were joining the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/45/L.6, entitled "Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories" and submitted under agenda item 115.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

FOURTH COMMITTEE
14th meeting
held on
Thursday, 25 October 1990
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 14th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ADOUKI (Congo)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (continued) (A/45/23 (Parts V and VI); A/45/644 and Corr.1; A/C.4/45/L.2, L.3, L.7 and L.8)

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AGENDA ITEM 115: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (continued) (A/45/560, A/C.4/45/L.6)

General debate (continued)

1. Mr. HASBI (Morocco), referring to the question of Western Sahara, said that his country had never declined a concrete and responsible dialogue and that since 1981 it had been arguing at the highest level for a referendum to be held in the Territory with a view to a peaceful, just and lasting resolution of the question and the realization of the ideals of all the peoples of the Maghreb.

2. In the existing circumstances Morocco sincerely hoped for a final and just settlement of the question of Western Sahara and reiterated its determination to make its contribution to the efforts to achieve that end; it maintained constructive contacts with the Secretary-General and recognized the contribution which he was making. In confirmation of its position and its readiness to move forward, his delegation agreed that the draft resolution on the item should be adopted without a vote.

3. Mr. LOHIA (Papua New Guinea) said that the decolonization process was far from complete, and the Government and people of Papua New Guinea fully supported the proclamation by the United Nations of the period 1990-2000 as the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

(Mr. Lohia, Papua New Guinea)

4. On the question of New Caledonia, his delegation welcomed the active participation of France in the work of the Fourth Committee and its contribution to the consideration of the question of New Caledonia and a number of other Non-Self-Governing Territories; it called upon France to transmit the necessary information under Article 73 e of the Charter.

5. Many Kanaks had lost their lives in the struggle for freedom and independence, but since the signing of the Matignon and Rue Ondinot Agreements New Caledonia had enjoyed relative peace and stability. His delegation urged the administering Power to transfer more political and governmental powers to the Kanaks. They must be given an opportunity to participate fully in the social, economic, political and cultural life of their own land.

6. It was quite clear from the statement by the French delegation at the previous meeting that the administering Power had no clear policy or plan for the self-determination and independence of New Caledonia. France's nuclear tests programme and militarization of its Non-Self-Governing Territories, including New Caledonia, were a serious concern to Papua New Guinea. The French authorities had placed two time-bombs in the South Pacific: firstly, if New Caledonia did not exercise its right to self-determination and independence in the near future, there could be serious political and social unrest in the Territory; secondly, France's programme of nuclear tests and disposal of nuclear wastes in the Territory created a threat of radioactive contamination. Both those issues had serious implications for peace and security in the South Pacific region and throughout the world. The establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the South Pacific was impossible until the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the reg on received independence.

7. His delegation believed that any act of self-determination must be consistent with the principles and practices of the United Nations and that all options, including independence, should remain open. An effort must be made in New Caledonia to educate the population about all the available options - an effort which was essential to any genuine act of self-determination. The administering Power, together with the United Nations, must assist in that process.

8. Papua New Guinea appealed to France for its full co-operation in the implementation in New Caledonia of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

9. Mr. MENAT (France), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that it was regrettable that in his statement the representative of Papua New Guinea had raised an issue - the nuclear tests carried out by France - which was not on the Committee's agenda. As the readily available reports of many scientific missions to the region and the data published by the French Government demonstrated, the nuclear tests in question did not harm the interests of the States of the region, the health of its population, or its environment.

The meeting was suspended at 11.55 a.m. and resumed at 12.20 p.m.

Consideration of draft resolutions

10. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should take a decision on the draft resolutions and decisions listed in document A/C.4/45/L.7.

Draft resolution contained in chapter VIII, paragraph 9, of document A/45/23 (Part V)

11. A recorded vote was taken on the draft resolution.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: None.

Abstaining: France, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

12. The draft resolution was adopted by 136 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

13. Mr. HARKIN (United Kingdom), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation had abstained from voting on the draft resolution because of the language of paragraph 2, according to which the General Assembly would decide when the administering Power's obligation to transmit information with respect to the Non-Self-Governing Territory would cease. The United Kingdom considered that such a decision should be taken by the Government of the respective Territory and by the administering Power.

14. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee had concluded its consideration of item 111.

Draft resolution contained in chapter VII, paragraph 18, of document A/45/23 (Part V)

Explanations of vote

15. Mr. HAJNOCZI (Austria) said that unfortunately the fourteenth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 17 of the draft resolution before the Fourth Committee included language that went beyond the thematic scope of the draft. Austria opposed the practice of singling out individual countries. It would therefore abstain, and hoped that the 1991 draft would enable the Committee to express international support for the role of the specialized agencies in the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

16. Mr. MEZZALAMA (Italy), speaking on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community, said that the accession of Namibia to independence and the dramatic changes in the world over the past year should have favoured a further rapprochement of views in the Fourth Committee and should have led to a realistic draft resolution. However, the text not only contained the previous year's contentious and, therefore, unhelpful terms, but also reintroduced elements that the Twelve had consistently opposed in the past.

17. The Twelve supported the efforts by the specialized agencies to provide humanitarian, technical and educational assistance to Territories covered under the current agenda item. They considered, however, that the autonomy and statutes of the specialized agencies must be respected.

18. The Twelve felt compelled to reiterate their opposition to and concern at the continued reference to apartheid in the context of decolonization. Not only was such reference totally out of place, but the language proposed was removed from reality and far from the consensus language adopted by the General Assembly under the appropriate agenda items. In particular, the Twelve found the fourteenth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 17 unacceptable, and were convinced that the total isolation of South Africa would undermine the efforts aimed at eliminating apartheid. Furthermore, the Twelve strongly objected to the singling out of an individual country in those paragraphs. Accordingly, they were unable to support the draft resolution.

19. Mr. SIGURDSSON (Iceland), speaking on behalf of the five Nordic countries, said they agreed that the specialized agencies had an important role with regard to the economic and social development of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. Consequently, the Nordic countries had provided significant humanitarian, technical and other assistance to peoples who had not yet secured their right of self-determination.

(Mr. Sigurdsson, Iceland)

20. Since the adoption of the 1989 resolution, there had been important improvements in the international political climate. Instead of reflecting those positive developments, the 1990 text was more confrontational and represented a major set-back.

21. The Nordic countries regretted that the Special Committee had returned to the practice of singling out individual countries or groups of countries that allegedly maintained extensive links with South Africa and co-operated with it in various fields. The Nordic countries strongly opposed the provisions in the fourteenth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 17 of the draft resolution. Those paragraphs were also irrelevant to the substance of the matter concerned. For those reasons, the Nordic countries could not support the draft resolution.

22. Ms. BIRD (Australia) said that her delegation would abstain from voting on the draft resolution. Regretfully, it was obliged to take that step because of the wording of the fourteenth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 17, which implied that contact with South Africa, including diplomatic contact, was tantamount to support for apartheid. Her Government, which maintained diplomatic links with South Africa, had been in the forefront in pressing for effective measures designed to bring apartheid to an end. Her delegation considered that such links were useful in maintaining pressure towards that end. In addition, Australia opposed the practice of singling out individual countries in the text before the Committee.

23. Mr. GREEN (Canada) said that his delegation would vote against the draft resolution on item 113, although there were many elements in the text that merited its support. The simple inclusion of references to apartheid would not have been sufficient reason for Canada to vote against the draft resolution. However, the language relating to apartheid was outdated, unrealistic and inconsistent with work being carried out elsewhere in the United Nations. Moreover, Canada could not support a draft resolution that condemned diplomatic contacts with South Africa. His delegation believed that such contacts had been, and continued to be, effective in helping to bring about peaceful and fundamental change in South Africa.

24. Mr. TENNE (Israel) said that the Committee again had to consider a draft resolution that bore little resemblance to reality. The text was partisan and polemical; it was designed not to solve problems, but to create them. It reflected a policy of confrontation, rather than a spirit of consensus. If the Committee wanted results to flow from its draft resolutions, it had to strive for agreement and understanding.

25. It would be wrong to speak of a collective responsibility on the part of the Special Committee as a whole for the situation that had arisen. Politicized amendments had been foisted upon the draft by one person: the Rapporteur, the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

26. Mr. SHAHEED (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking on a point of order, said that the representative of the racist Zionist entity in the territory of occupied Palestine had completely deviated from an explanation of vote, and should pay attention to the need to observe the rules of procedure.

27. Mr. TENNE (Israel), reminded the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic that it was standard practice in United Nations organs to refer to countries by their names. "The Zionist entity" was not his country's name. In referring to Syria, he always used the designation "the Syrian Arab Republic", although he could have called it "the Syrian Arab Dictatorship" or "the Syrian Arab Tyranny".

28. Mr. SHAHEED (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking on a point of order, appealed to the previous speaker to observe the rules of procedure. A statement in explanation of vote could not be used to criticize other delegations.

29. The CHAIRMAN invited the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to observe the voting procedure.

30. Mr. TENNE (Israel) said that the amendments being forced on the Committee by the Syrian Arab Republic served only the political goals of that country's Government but hardly the goal of decolonization. The singling out of Israel was not only unfair and untrue; it was a blatant misrepresentation of Israel's relations with developing countries. By way of example, he said that in the current year the Government of Israel was offering scholarships for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories under a large number of programmes. Hundreds of black South Africans had been trained in Israel side by side with tens of thousands of other trainees from countries of Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and the South Pacific. Hundreds of development projects had been successfully run by Israeli experts in those countries over the years. He wondered whether the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic could report sim lar achievements, or whether he could be proud of the achievements of the Syrian army in Beirut or of Syrian co-operation with international terrorists.

31. Mr. SHAHEED (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking on a point of order, said that since the question of Lebanon was not on the agenda for the meeting, it could not be discussed in statements made in explanation of vote. He could not tell whether the representative of the Zionist entity was playing the fool or was really a fool. What Syria wanted for Lebanon was nothing more than what the Lebanese people themselves wanted.

32. Mr. TENNE (Israel) said that his delegation found it necessary to recommend that other delegations should vote against the draft resolution, in the hope that the Special Committee would one day submit a fair and balanced text based on understanding.

33. A recorded vote was taken on the draft resolution.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Côte d'Ivoire, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Liechtenstein, Malawi, Malta, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Zaire.

34. The draft resolution was adopted by 105 votes to 12, with 23 abstentions.

Explanations of vote

35. Mr. SHAHEED (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution in keeping with its traditional commitment to the cause of decolonization. The text was the result of open and extensive informal consultations in which almost all delegations had taken part. It was essentially the same in nature as corresponding resolutions adopted in previous years. That was due to the fact that the objectives defined therein had not yet been achieved. While changes were indeed taking place throughout the world, it could not be said that they had a bearing on the right of peoples to self-determination. In its references to countries, the Special Committee had not used unseemly language; there was nothing insulting about such references. His delegation had listened patiently to the statements made during the debate by a number of delegations. It respected their views, even though it considered some of their observations inaccurate and questionable.

36. Mr. EHLERS (Uruguay) said that his delegation, faithful to its traditional stand in favour of all efforts undertaken by the international community with a view to ensuring the success of the decolonization process, had voted for the draft resolution. It considered, however, that the text of the resolution touched upon issues which, in view of recent developments, were no longer timely. Uruguay objected to the wording of the fourteenth preambular paragraph and of operative paragraph 17 because it felt that it would be a mistake to lose touch with the respective parties.

37. Mr. GUVEN (Turkey) said that his country, which believed that assistance to the social and economic development of Non-Self-Governing Territories was an absolutely essential pre-condition for their accession to independence and attached great importance to the role of international organizations in that connection, had always supported resolutions designed to contribute towards constructive co-operation between those organizations and colonial territories. His delegation's hopes for a consensus text had not been realized; it regretted that certain elements of the resolution just adopted were unrelated to the topic under consideration and merely diverted attention from the central issue, and had abstained from voting in the hope that a more balanced text would be adopted the following year.

38. Ms. CAÑAS (Argentina) said that her delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution but wished to enter a strong reservation with regard to the references contained in the fourteenth preambular paragraph and in operative paragraph 17 to countries with which Argentina maintained normal diplomatic relations. The practice was discriminatory and incompatible with the new international climate.

39. Mr. SLABY (Czechoslovakia) said that his country fully supported the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples but did not approve the resolution just adopted inasmuch as that resolution unfortunately contained obsolete language, referred to certain countries by name and reduced the principle of self-determination exclusively to independence; it also raised the question of apartheid, which was not on the Fourth Committee's agenda.

40. By abstaining from voting on the draft resolution his delegation hoped to alert the Special Committee's members to the fact that times were changing and to the urgent need for the Special Committee to reorient its work.

41. Mr. DORJGOTOV (Mongolia) said that although his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution, it considered operative paragraph 17 superfluous as the resolution was concerned with specialized agencies.

42. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had completed the consideration of agenda item 113.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.